

TITO v. STALIN

TITO V. STALIN

The Battle of the Marshals

By

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PREFACE

FOR nearly two years Marshal Stalin has been waging a cold war against Marshal Tito every bit as merciless and relentless as that he is waging against Britain and the United States in Germany.

Over the radio, from Moscow and the Cominform capitals, Bucharest, Sofia, Budapest, Prague, Warsaw and Tirana, a ceaseless flow of abusive propaganda has been streaming through the ether, aimed at discrediting the Tito regime and bringing about its downfall.

In the Moscow newspapers and those of the Cominform countries, a similar barrage has been maintained.

An economic blockade has been enforced by Russia and the Cominform countries against Yugoslavia, cutting off oil, machinery, manufactured goods and war material.

Yugoslavs living in Cominform countries have been arrested and their clubs seized. Young Yugoslavs studying in Czechoslovakia to become technicians have been forced to return to Yugoslavia.

An attempt has been made to found an anti-Tito movement in Rumania. Agents-provocateurs have been sent across the frontier into Yugoslavia to stir up trouble. They are still crossing the frontier.*

Every method short of war has been employed in an attempt to drive a wedge between the Yugoslav people and the Tito regime and bring about Tito's downfall.

Why has this campaign of unprecedented violence been unleashed against Tito? Why should Russia and her satellites, totalling over 231 million people, take such drastic measures against a small country like Yugoslavia, with a population of 15 millions?

Why should Marshal Stalin wish to overthrow Marshal Tito, a fellow Communist? What has Stalin got to fear from Tito?

These are some of the questions I have tried to answer.

Chislehurst, Kent.

Contents

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|------------------------------|------|
| I THROUGH THE IRON CURTAIN | 9 |
| II THE CONFERENCE OPENS | 16 |
| III VYSHINSKY'S DANUBE | 25 |
| IV THE FOOD SITUATION | 35 |
| V THE FIVE YEAR PLAN | 46 |
| VI LIFE IN BELGRADE | 54 |
| VII THEY LIVE IN DARKNESS | 67 |
| VIII THE BATTLE BEGINS | 83 |
| IX TITO DEFIES THE COMINFORM | 105 |
| X FROM WORDS TO DEEDS | 108 |
| XI TITO CHALLENGES STALIN | 116 |
| XII YUGOSLAVIA FORSAKEN | 131 |
| XIII YUGOSLAVIA ON TRIAL | 145 |
| XIV LUKEWARM WAR | 155 |
| XV YUGOSLAVIA'S ROLE IN UNO | 171 |
| XVI THIS MAN TITO | 192 |

CHAPTER I

Through the Iron Curtain

THE Yugoslav authorities granted me a ten-day visa in July to report the Danubian Conference for the United Press. As far as I know, they granted visas to all those correspondents who applied. Yugoslavia was host to the Conference and was going to put on a show for the first international conference held in Yugoslavia since the end of the war and the first ever to be held in a Communist Yugoslavia.

The Iron Curtain was lifted, but only for a spell of ten days. Although the conference would plainly last longer than ten days, my visa was ten days only.

Even for their first international conference, the Yugoslav Communists would not relax their rigid control of the Press. They wanted foreign correspondents to go to Belgrade to report the conference, but they had not the grace to give proper visas or to make out visas for the duration of the conference.

They wanted to keep a whiphand over the foreign correspondents and be in a position to refuse them an extension of their visas if they should write anything to which the Yugoslav authorities objected.

I asked the Czechs for a transit visa, as I had to pass through Prague on my way to Belgrade. They gave me a visa for two months and ration tickets.

The Czechs gave me my visa while I waited in the Czech Consulate, as they did scores of other people at the same time. The Yugoslavs had to cable Belgrade—at my expense.

The first indication I had that I had penetrated the

Iron Curtain was a request from the attractive hostess on the Pan-American Airways plane in which I was travelling, to surrender my passport.

I was flying from Frankfurt to Prague and the plane was nearing Ruzyne Airport, a few miles outside Prague, when she made the request. Being one of those people who are rather particular about giving up their passports, I asked her why. She said that it had to be handed over to the Czech security police and that I would get it back after I had been through the customs.

The war had been over three years and the expression security police sounded rather strange, if not ominous. I handed over my passport, wondering what it had to do with the Czech security police that I was going to Belgrade to report the Danubian Conference.

The plane, on which there were less than half a dozen passengers, landed at Ruzyne in blazing sunshine. The security police gave me back my passport without delay. The customs were politeness itself and only showed an interest in cigarettes.

I was met by Dick Clark, Prague bureau manager for the United Press, who drove me into the city in a jeep. It was a very different Prague that I saw this time, compared with my previous visit, shortly after the liberation.

The whole city seemed to be in mourning. The atmosphere was funereal and there was little sign of life. The grimness which the Communists bring with them wherever they go had permeated the whole city.

But the Communists cannot take away the architectural beauty of what has been described as the 'Paris of Central Europe'. A city redolent with history and still preserving its historic buildings, Prague has none the less managed to keep pace with the times and be a

modern city. Yet there is nothing incongruous in the mixture of ancient and modern.

The bridges across the Vltava take you back to the Middle Ages, with the King Charles Bridge as the most magnificent example of mediaeval architecture. The delicate tracery of St. Vitus Cathedral is like an engraving.

The broad main streets, with their up-to-date shops, now with very little in them, are a contrast which do not shock the eye. They seem to fit in without any clashing of architectural styles.

We drove straight to the United Press office, which seemed to be filled with teleprinters so that there was nowhere to sit down. They never ceased hammering out their messages and the din made conversation difficult. I met all the members of the staff, wrote a message and then went off at breakneck speed in the jeep to Dick Clark's villa on the hills outside the capital, high up amongst the breezes and with a glorious view of the capital.

What is it about a jeep that makes one travel at speed?

We had a very enjoyable dinner, punctuated with numerous telephone calls from the office, after which we were invited to a party at the nearby villa of the American military attaché, Colonel Fallon.

There is no fraternisation. Czechs do not mix with 'Westerners'. They dare not. This boycotting of non-Czechs by the Czechs has started since the Communists seized power. Before, Czechs were the friendliest of peoples and only too delighted to mix with British and Americans.

I shall never forget a memorable evening in Prague soon after the liberation, when a party of Czechs who

shared our table at a night club invited us to their flat to have a nightcap after the night club had closed.

That nightcap went on all night, and British, Czechs and Americans finished up drinking slivovice with arms linked and toasting eternal friendship as dawn rose over the Vltava. Nobody had a thought for Communists. Nobody suspected then that Stalin was already planning to double-cross his friend Benes.

An officer in President Benes's bodyguard, who wore the Order of the White Lion, told me quite openly and cheerfully what it was like being a bodyguard. President Benes apparently had no objection to his bodyguard enjoying themselves drinking and dancing when not on duty.

In those days there were still Russian troops in Czechoslovakia, but little was seen of them, except when parties came on sightseeing tours of Prague. Czechs went out of their way to be helpful and friendly to British and Americans. A British woman tried to buy a Czech shawl in a shop on the main street, but there were none left in stock. A well-dressed Czech woman who overheard the conversation asked for her address and promised to send one of hers. The next morning the shawl duly arrived at the British woman's hotel, neatly wrapped in brown paper and with her name correctly spelt. It was a token of Czech friendship.

But it is a different Prague now. The spirit of friendliness has disappeared from the city of dreaming spires. Life is grim and the laughter has gone.

I flew from Prague to Belgrade in a Yugoslav Air Line Dakota. The hostess, a six-foot-tall, broad-shouldered, dark-haired girl who spoke perfect English, told me that she had come up from Belgrade the day before and then the plane was empty. For the return trip the plane was

full, mainly of correspondents flying down for the opening of the Danubian Conference.

Each passenger was given a paper bag, containing a roll and buns for afternoon tea.

The trip was uneventful. Passage through the customs and security police at Zemun Airport, outside Belgrade, was devoid of formality. There was no fuss and no bother. The hostess had collected our passports on the plane and these we collected at a guichet. Our bags were not opened, but piled on an airport bus.

On the tarmac, waiting for the bus to go into Belgrade, I ran into Ronnie Steed, Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, who had flown in on a Dutch plane from Amsterdam. Whilst we were talking, David Crichton, Press Attaché at the British Embassy in Belgrade, strolled over and made himself known to us.

He offered to help in any way possible and gave us his telephone number. This was the first time I had had the experience of a Press Attaché meeting correspondents on their arrival and offering to help. I later discovered that Crichton was an old Desert Rat, which probably explains his constructive attitude.

The drive into Belgrade took us past a huge tower which bore the name 'Tito' in enormous red capital letters. The bus decanted us all outside the Balkan Hotel, where the Yugoslav authorities had billeted all the visiting correspondents. Waiting for the bus was Stojan Bralovics, local correspondent for the United Press, to whom I had spoken over the telephone from Prague the night before.

He told me that the resident correspondents had been ejected from the Moskva Hotel to make room for the delegates and had been billeted at the Majestic Hotel.

All the special correspondents who were in Belgrade for the conference were billeted at the Balkan Hotel.

The Yugoslav authorities had booked a room for me. Apparently my application for a visa for the conference had been sufficient. The Yugoslav Foreign Office had done the rest. I deposited my bag and went off with Bralovics for dinner.

He thought it a good idea to dine in the open air, as it was a hot July night. So we went to a garden restaurant not far from the Balkan. Every table was occupied, either with men in the uniform of the Yugoslav Army or in overalls, and their womenfolk. The tables had no tablecloths and everybody was drinking beer or eating what looked like steaks.

We sat down at a table where there were two vacant chairs and ordered some beer. It was good beer, brewed locally. I discovered later that it was liable to run out on certain days of the week, as supply could not meet demand.

Over the beer, we talked about postwar Yugoslavia, the conference and mutual friends. I began to feel hungry, so we asked the waiter what there was on the menu. There was only one dish, tunny fish, which is what everybody else was eating and looked like steak.

Having eaten tinned tunny fish, I was no tunny fan, so I said I would do without. However, after a few more beers, I decided I would try it. So the waiter brought us a couple of tunny steaks. They were fresh tunny and carefully grilled. They tasted good and I can thoroughly recommend grilled tunny steak to anybody seeking a change from Britain's monotonous diet. They are still fishing tunny out of the sea off the Scarborough coast, so there ought to be some on the market.

• Everybody gets up early in postwar Yugoslavia, as it is now described as a people's republic. Not that any more work is done by doing so, but it creates a good impression. So my first night I went to bed early, leaving instructions with the hall porter to call me early in the morning.

CHAPTER II

The Conference Opens

THE morning of the 30th of July, I was up bright and early and breakfasted in the cellar which serves as a dining-room at the Balkan Hotel. There was an army of waiters, specially imported for the conference, and there was an impressive menu.

None of the waiters spoke English or French or German, but the menu had a translation of the dishes from Serbo-Croat into French, so that by pointing with the forefinger at the appropriate line, it was possible to get the breakfast one wanted.

They gave me a magnificent breakfast of ham and eggs covering the whole of a huge plate, followed by rolls and butter, marmalade, jam and coffee.

I was without pencil or notebook, so I went out to do some shopping. As I went through the door of the hotel, out into the blazing July sunshine, a Yugoslav naval rating, armed with rifle and clad in immaculate white uniform, gave me a smart salute. As I strolled along the street, blue-uniformed militia, with automatics at their belts, were clearing the pavement in the vicinity of the hotel of pedestrians.

They were doing the same outside the Moskva Hotel, only a few yards away. All pedestrians were forced to leave the pavement and walk in the road or cross over to the other side. The action of the militia only aroused their curiosity the more, so that there were crowds on the pavement across the road from the Moskva Hotel, hoping for a glimpse of the Russian delegate Andrei Vyshinsky, or Rumania's mystery woman, Ana Pauker.

I found a shop which looked like the Yugoslav equiva-

lent to Woolworths' and went in in search of notebook and pencil. The shop was well stocked, but the finish of all the goods was poor. There were some good dolls, dressed in Yugoslav national costume, but most of the toys were wooden and crude. Everything was fantastically expensive.

I bought my notebook and pencil and joined Bralovics and Ronnie Steed, the *Daily Telegraph* diplomatic correspondent. Next call was the Kolaraz University building, where the conference was to open in the afternoon, to get our passes.

We strolled along the main street, which is lined with shops. There was one elegant shop, with Yugoslav carpets at fabulous prices but excellent quality and in vivid colours, a coffee set of beaten yellow metal and silver boxes and bracelets.

But that was the only one that displayed goods of quality. There were several clothing shops, but the quality of the goods displayed was poor. I discovered later, when I needed a pair of socks, that coupons were needed and there were no coupons for foreigners.

Bookshops were preponderant. They were filled with Marxist propaganda in different forms and portraits of Tito and Stalin, but no fiction.

Traffic was negligible. An odd motor-car or so, belonging to one or other of the delegations, one or two Italian-made electric trolley buses, went by, but that was all.

Armed guards of the Yugoslav Navy stood outside the Kolaraz University building, but when we made our business known, we were allowed in without difficulty. The head of the Information Department, Velizar Savich, an earnest-looking bespectacled young man, received us almost immediately.

A little conversation about our hotel accommodation and our passes were given to us. We were not allowed to see the conference hall as workmen were still hammering away, putting the finishing touches.

I went back to the hotel and wrote a brief preliminary message to the conference opening and put in a telephone call to Prague. After considerable delay, I got through and dictated my story for relay to London. There was no censorship.

Several hours before the conference opened all approaches to the Kolaraz University were closed to the public. Armed militia directed all traffic and all pedestrians, except those with conference passes, along routes which took them away from the entrance to the building, over which now hung the flags of the eleven nations represented.

Vyshinsky, who was the delegate on whom all eyes were fixed, was determined not to be the last in his seat. Forgetting all dignity, he entered at the double and dashed up the carpeted stairs leading to the entrance to the session chamber, passing the American Ambassador, Mr. Cavendish Cannon, on the way.

The entrance to the conference hall was tastefully screened with blue velvet curtains. Inside the hall itself, formerly a lecture hall for students, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Stanoye Simich, sat at the head of an enormously long horseshoe table, flanked on his right by the American Ambassador and on his left by Vyshinsky.

Each delegation had its national flag on the table in front. Behind the Yugoslav Foreign Minister hung the flags of the eleven nations represented. Huge arc lights had been placed in the Press and public gallery for the filming of the opening session.

The countries represented were Great Britain, the

United States, France, Russia, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Austria.

The Austrian representative, Count Orsini Rosenberg, whose manner of walking led to the wicked suggestion that he was wearing corsets, was there as an observer and did not possess the right to vote, although allowed to address the conference.

This difference in status was due to Austria's position as an occupied country, with whom no peace treaty had been concluded.

The Eastern bloc, comprising Russia, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania, had an overwhelming majority, and it soon became apparent that the Russian delegate, Andrei Vyshinsky, was going to use it to steamroller the Russian proposals for the future status of the Danube through the conference, despite opposition and protests from the British, American and French delegates.

But, although the results of the voting were more or less a foregone conclusion even before the conference opened, there was one question which intrigued all attending the opening session of the conference. That was, which way would Yugoslavia vote? Would she vote with the Russian bloc, despite her expulsion from the Cominform, or would she still show her independence and vote as her interests lay?

We did not have long to wait. From the first proposal before the conference, it became quite clear that Yugoslavia was going to toe the Russian line on matters affecting the regime on the Danube, even though she stoutly maintained her right to run her own internal affairs as she pleased.

The first proposal put before the conference was one by Vyshinsky, that the official languages of the confer-

ence should be Russian and French. Dr. Alesh Bebler, the Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister, supported the proposal on the grounds that the United States and Great Britain were not in Europe and were not Danubian countries and therefore had no right to insist that English should be an official language of the conference.

From that point on, Yugoslavia consistently supported and voted with the Eastern bloc, even to the extent of rejecting out of hand a proposal by the British Ambassador, Sir Charles Peake, that Belgrade should be made the new headquarters of the Danubian Commission.

Thus, right from the start, the conference reflected the partition of Europe. The satellites of Soviet Russia voted with machinelike precision in support of any and every proposal put forward by Vyshinsky, who was obviously in a hurry to get the Russian draft of the new Danubian Convention rushed through as fast as possible.

He put up a masterly performance of verbal bull-dozing. He ignored the conference rules of procedure and went on talking long past agreed times for adjournment. A two-hours speech by Vyshinsky became quite a commonplace. When he spoke two hours, another two hours were taken up translating his speech into English and another two hours translating it into French, for although the Eastern bloc overruled a proposal that English should be an official language of the conference, it was agreed that English should be a working language.

This meant that although documents would be issued by the official secretariat only in Russian and French, speeches would be translated into English and French.

A team of United Nations interpreters sat at a table between the two arms of the horseshoe table at which the delegates sat. They took notes and after the speeches

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were over translated them into ivory-enamelled micro-phones. Had the simultaneous translation system used at the Nuremberg trial been in use, the work of the conference would have been lightened and brought to a speedier conclusion.

The object of the conference was to reach agreement on navigation of the Danube. Hitherto, the Danube had been governed by the 1921 Statute, to which Russia was not a signatory. Russia, however, made herself a riparian state by seizing Bessarabia from Rumania. Russia also concluded, after World War II, armistice agreements with Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary which gave the Soviet High Command control of shipping facilities on large sections of the river.

Soviet control of the bulk of the Danubian fleets and port facilities was perpetuated through the formation of joint shipping companies with Rumania in July 1921 Hungary in March 1921 and Yugoslavia in March

These companies, in which the Soviet Union obtained a decisive vote, were granted special privileges, such as freedom from taxes and preferential treatment in obtaining foreign exchange and were also potentially empowered to monopolise loading, repair and fuel facilities on the river. At the end of the war, Russia also organised a special company within its zone of Austria which, though primarily military, was also engaged in commercial shipping on the Danube.

The Danube, which flows through eight countries, was, before the war, a major highway for the transport and interchange of goods between the Balkan countries. Soviet Russia became the eighth country through which it flows when it acquired the province of Bessarabia.

The Danube was of principal importance for three

Eastern European countries, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania, but it was also valuable, although to a lesser degree, to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Austria, who used its far from blue waters to ship raw materials outwards and receive industrial and manufactured goods from the West.

Its value to the Eastern European countries has been enhanced by the devastation caused by the war. With railways and roads destroyed, bridges blown and locomotives and railway rolling-stock wrecked, the Danube, were it navigable for the whole of its length, would be an even more valuable outlet for trade with the West for the Eastern European countries than it was before the war.

The development of the interchange of goods between the Balkan countries on a larger scale than before the war depends to a large extent on freedom of navigation of the Danube. The transport of large quantities of raw materials and finished goods between the Balkan countries can be effected with greater speed, ease and cheapness by using Danube barge traffic.

But at the end of the war, Russia stopped all non-Soviet shipping near Linz, in Austria, and refused to permit non-Soviet commerce in the Russian zone of Austria. This divided the Danube into two sectors, and between these two sectors there has been no traffic since the end of the war.

This has closed a valuable artery for the shipment by the East European countries of cereals, petroleum and petroleum products, copper, ore and agricultural products to the West and for receiving from the West manufactured and industrial goods, fertilisers, salt and sugar.

Before the war, the commercial fleet on the Danube

consisted of about 3,500 vessels, of which 1,000 flew flags of nations other than those of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and 300 operated under the flags of states through which the Danube did not flow, known as non-riparian states.

The postwar Danube fleet consists of about 2,500 vessels, of which about 1,800 are in the lower Danube and about 700 in the American zones of Austria and Germany.

A large part of the fleet in Germany and Austria is now idle as a result of the partition of the Danube. What this means to the Balkan countries in terms of trade is indicated by the figures of pre-war Danube traffic.

Rumania shipped 1,873,000 tons of produce on the Danube in 1936; Hungary 1,320,000 tons; Austria 1,119,000; Germany 1,095,000; Yugoslavia 1,060,000; Czechoslovakia 958,000 and Bulgaria 209,000 tons.

The Danube was one of landlocked Hungary's major links with the outside world. Yugoslavia shipped one-third of her imports and one-fifth of her exports during 1938 by Danube barge. Almost 24 per cent of Bulgaria's foreign trade shipped on the Danube in 1936 went to Germany and Austria, while 80.7 per cent of Germany's total Danube traffic, including both domestic and foreign, went to Eastern European countries. Austria shipped 72.2 per cent of her river commerce to those countries. East to West traffic involved about 2,800,000 of the total of 3,800,000 tons of foreign trade shipped on the river in 1936. The year 1936 was the peak year for Danubian traffic, which totalled approximately 7,500,000 tons, evenly divided between domestic and foreign trade.

The major conflict between the Eastern bloc and the

Western States centred round the principle of freedom of navigation.

Britain, the United States and France were firm in maintaining that there should be complete freedom of navigation on the Danube, with no discrimination between riparian and non-riparian states.

The British delegate, Sir Charles Peake, tabled a list of principles on which the new convention should be based. In this document it was laid down that the Danube should be an international waterway over the whole navigable course of which navigation should be free and open for the nationals, vessels of commerce and goods of all States on a footing of equality in regard to port and navigation charges and conditions for merchant shipping, with no distinction to the detriment of nationals, goods and flag of any power.

The convention should include a definition of the internationalised river system similar to that in the 1921 Statute, the statement continued, and include all the mouths of the river. It should ensure that no State should either legally or in practice be able to bar the vessels of other flags from free access to or exit from the river.

The United States delegation produced a draft convention in which Article 1 laid down 'International navigation on the Danube River System shall be free and open to the vessels of commerce, goods and persons of all states on a footing of entire equality without discrimination.'

CHAPTER III

Vyshinsky's Danube

THE Russian draft convention made the Danube a closed river, use of which is to be confined to the riparian states, all of which are Russian satellites, with the exception of Yugoslavia.

It paid lip service to the principle of freedom of navigation, but in the very article which proposed freedom of navigation, the apparent concession was nullified by the sentence which followed immediately after.

Article 1 of the Russian draft convention laid down: 'Navigation on the Danube shall be free and open for the nationals, vessels of commerce and goods of all States, on a footing of equality in regard to port and navigation charges and conditions for merchant shipping.' The next sentence read: 'The foregoing shall not apply to traffic between ports of the same State.'

In other words, the Russian draft convention empowered the riparian states to take whatever steps they pleased to hold up, stop and search, if they so wished, any barge or ship passing through that stretch of the Danube within their frontiers.

The Russian draft convention also excluded Great Britain, the United States and France from the new Danube Commission, which it proposed should be composed of one representative of each Danubian State.

This draft, which was eventually approved with only slight modifications, cancelled all obligations of the European Commission of the Danube for the payment of credits granted by Britain, France and other states. A feature of the Russian convention was that the new regime for the Danube should be non-profit making.

Great Britain and France have an interest in the navigation of the Danube by virtue of being signatories of the 1921 Statute. The United States was not a signatory to that convention, but attended the conference as one of the occupying powers in Austria and Germany. Germany was a member of the Danube Commission before the war.

The United States further maintained an interest in the Danube on the grounds that the partition of the river is retarding the economic recovery of the countries through which it flows and that resumption of normal trade relations between East and West was contemplated when the European Recovery programme was formulated.

There is the additional fact that the United States zones of Germany and Austria hold 700 barges which cannot navigate the Danube below Linz, as a result of the Soviet river blockade.

Sir Charles Peake put up a vigorous fight against the Russian steamroller, although the machinelike way in which the Eastern bloc voted precluded any possibility of the Western representatives bringing about any important change in the Russian convention.

He crossed swords with Vyshinsky on more than one occasion and each time emerged the moral victor. Vyshinsky, despite the fact that he controlled the majority necessary to railroad his convention through without difficulty, used the conference as a platform from which he made long and boring speeches in a loud voice, full of propaganda and misrepresentation, speeches in which he waxed indignant and red in the face, speeches during which he banged on the table with his fist to drive his propaganda points home.

He got the British delegate particularly annoyed

when he accused him of having delivered an ultimatum, which was quite untrue.

Sir Charles Peake, who did not lose control or raise his voice, answered Vyshinsky's first explosive utterance in which he untruthfully accused Sir Charles of delivering an ultimatum, in these words: 'The Soviet delegate described the reasoned and moderate statement which I made on Saturday last as an ultimatum. That statement is now in the hands of the conference. They are able to judge for themselves. The use of such a description is an abuse of language. I cannot think what impelled the Soviet delegate to use it. I wonder whether the Soviet delegate had mistaken me for a prisoner in the dock and was prosecuting. I am not in that position. I must now disabuse him.

'I for one have no intention of being bullied or intimidated in these proceedings. The United Kingdom delegation will not jump to the crack of Vyshinsky's whip. Let me make that plain.'

At a later stage in the conference, Sir Charles proposed that Belgrade should be the seat of the Danubian River Commission instead of Galatz, as proposed by Russia. In support of his proposal, he pointed out that Belgrade was a big city, with all the necessary conveniences, and such a gesture would be a tribute to the courtesies and facilities received by the delegates from Yugoslavia as host to the conference.

He had no sooner sat down than the Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister, Dr. Alesh Bebler, jumped to his feet to reject the suggestion.

He said that the Yugoslav delegation was in agreement with the whole of the Soviet draft convention and therefore implicitly accepted the article referring to the seat of the new Danubian River Commission.

He added: 'The prevailing international situation [he was presumably referring to the tension over Berlin] cannot leave any doubt about the political intentions of the proposal.'

Sir Charles then withdrew his proposal, adding slyly 'as it seems embarrassing to the Yugoslavs'.

But, although Yugoslavia was toeing the line in the conference hall, Tito was not having anything to do with any of the delegations. During the whole of the conference he stayed away from Belgrade and spent the conference period at his summer home at Bled, in Slovenia.

He did not receive Vyshinsky nor did he send any message to the conference.

The conference was notable for one of the most extraordinary receptions it has been my lot to attend. The Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Stanoye Simich, was host to the delegates at the Officers' Club.

With the customary rudeness reserved for journalists in Yugoslavia, he did not invite the correspondents who had sweated in the July heat to report the millions of words poured forth in the conference hall.

However, the United States delegation, with an old-world courtesy which did great credit to their Public Relations Officer, Walter Dustmann, overcame any scruples the correspondents might have had about gate-crashing the reception and issued their own invitations to the correspondents.

Armed with these imposing pieces of paper, several of us went into the Officers' Club, were duly saluted by the immaculately uniformed sentries and advanced into the ballroom, where four Yugoslav cabinet ministers received the guests. That is, they stood and shook hands. They did not say a word.

The guests were standing round in small groups which were confined to nationalities or jobs. Thus, the diplomats were in small groups, the service attachés in other groups and the correspondents in another, usually according to nationality.

The Iron Curtain even came down for this occasion. There was hardly any mingling and none at all between East and West. The groups just stood around and talked to each other.

There was an orchestra in the gallery, but it did not play. Perhaps it was overwhelmed by the stiffness of the icy atmosphere.

After a time, during which the Yugoslav cabinet ministers did not circulate among their guests, we moved out into the garden, where there was a colossal running buffet. Some of us just picked up a plate and helped ourselves to an odd helping or so of the excellent fare, which we nibbled. The Eastern bloc delegates hied themselves off to a special corner of the garden, where they had a sit-down meal.

After supper, there was nobody in the ballroom, so it struck me as a good idea to get the orchestra to play something that night before they fell asleep. I asked them to play 'Adios Muchachos', the Argentine tango.

They struck up the tune with great verve and soon its strains were echoing out into the garden. But nobody came in to dance. The Eastern bloc delegates took it as a hint that it was time they went, so, led by Vyshinsky and Ana Pauker, who left hurriedly together, they went.

It struck me that I had made my contribution towards relieving the dullness of what had undoubtedly been the dulllest reception I had ever attended, so I returned to my hotel and went to bed.

There being no conference session on a Sunday, the

first Sunday I was in Belgrade, I went for a stroll to see what the city looked like and how the ordinary people spent their spare time.

Thousands of youths and girls, bearing the Yugoslav national flag in blue, white and red, with the five-point star superimposed, paraded four abreast through the streets of the city all morning long, singing partisan songs. They made a particular point of parading past the Moskva Hotel, just to show Vyshinsky they were good Communists. There were only two red flags among the forest of flags they were carrying.

I kept meeting processions in my stroll, or perhaps it was the same procession each time. They kept it up all morning and afternoon, marching and singing their way round the capital.

Belgrade is a city of surprising contrasts. The streets and buildings are modern, but the tools with which they are built are of the most primitive. Piles of bricks and stones and baulks of timber lay around the centre of the city, and although it was Sunday, workmen were busy repairing bomb damage.

On the shores of the Danube, just outside the city, youths and girls swam in the river, while a few yards away workmen pulled baulks of timber out of the water for housing and building purposes.

They used ox-drawn wooden carts to shift the timber, while a few yards away youths stripped to the waist sunbathed on floating rafts or dived into the river from a diving-platform.

Peasant women, their heads covered with kerchiefs, sat patiently on bundles, waiting for tramcars. Women returned from shopping, their stringbags filled with vegetables. A flock of sheep trotted along one of the main streets on the way to the slaughterhouse.

Most of the men about were in their shirtsleeves. Those who had jackets were wearing them slung over their shoulders. Others wore composite outfits which included many items of uniform worn during the partisan campaigns.

I got another glimpse of Yugoslavia at work during a conducted tour of 'Novi Belgrade', the new Belgrade that is being built across the river. The new city was still very much in its infancy when I toured it. When completed, this new city will consist mainly of government and party buildings, with an hotel.

The framework of the new Praesidium was going up in concrete and the workers employed on the job were queueing up for their evening meal of beans. They included brigades of workers from different parts of the world, including England, and all were housed in wooden huts. There were many women and young girls among them, all wearing slacks and looking bronzed, healthy and happy.

The most striking feature of the work on Novi Belgrade was the absence of modern machinery and transport. I saw only one crane and that bore an enamel plate with the name of a firm in Heilbronn, Germany. It was part of the reparations Yugoslavia had received from Germany, and this, plus UNRRA, has been the main source of Yugoslavia's machinery.

This shortage of machinery and mechanical equipment is the biggest handicap under which Yugoslavia is labouring at the present moment, in her struggle to change the economy of the country from one of a backward agricultural country merely supplying raw materials to more industrialised countries into that of an industrialised country, mining her own minerals and turning them into her own manufactured goods.

Many of the locomotives on the railways were supplied by UNRRA, as were most of the tractors that are being used on the land. The laying of railway lines, in which volunteer youth brigades from various countries have helped, has been done and is being done with the minimum of machinery.

When a huge turbo-generator was shipped to one of the Dalmatian ports, it lay in the hold of the ship for weeks because there was not a crane powerful enough to lift it out.

The miners are without modern equipment and have to use the most primitive methods to extract the ore.

Not only is there a shortage of machinery, but there is an acute shortage of transport. There are no petrol-driven buses in Belgrade, just a few Italian-manufactured single-decker electrically propelled trolley buses, which are packed to suffocation and hopelessly inadequate to cope with the number of people wanting to use them. Scores are left standing at the bus stops during rush hour.

There is a handful of battered Italian-manufactured motor-cars which function as taxis, but all those I saw looked as though they would drop to pieces if you sneezed in them. They are all of a very ripe pre-war vintage, but every time one puts in an appearance at the rank outside the Moskva Hotel, there is a verbal duel to see who gets it.

Private cars are non-existent. The only cars seen on the streets are those that belong to high Government officials or army officers, diplomats or an occasional foreign correspondent. There are only two ambulances for Belgrade and these are old Eighth Army desert vehicles, passed on by UNRRA. In addition to the shortage of transport, there is an almost complete dearth

of petrol. Britain helped out at one stage by supplying about 200,000 gallons.

After nineteen days' discussion, the Danubian Conference wound up with approval of the Soviet draft convention virtually unchanged from its original form.

The Soviet convention was solemnly voted article by article, through the preamble and forty-seven articles, one annexe and the supplementary protocol.

The British Ambassador and the entire British delegation sat back from the table at the beginning of the voting to indicate that they were not participating. Each time a vote was taken the United States Ambassador, Mr. Cavendish Cannon, raised his hand in abstention. Fifty times he raised his hand to indicate that the United States abstained from voting. The Eastern bloc delegates mechanically raised their hands, but after a while got tired and did not bother.

The British, United States and French delegations boycotted the ceremony of the signing of the Danubian Convention, which started eighteen minutes late and was performed in a blaze of arc-lights and whirring newsreel cameras.

It took ten minutes for the Eastern bloc delegates to rise from their seats, walk up between the two arms comprising the horseshoe table, their steps noiseless on the blue pile carpet, and sign the convention. Each delegate sat at the table on which lay the rather appropriately coloured red leather folder containing, between sheets of blotting-paper, the convention.

All used the golden fountain pen at the side of the folder, except Dr. Aleš Bebler, the Yugoslav delegate, who used his own.

Vyshinsky signed first. Ana Pauker, the Foreign Minister of Rumania, dressed specially for the occasion

and wore a grey flowered silk costume, grey suède shoes and carried a lizard-skin bag. She was the fifth in the order of signing.

I stayed in Yugoslavia for three months, and during those three months saw no evidence that the signing of the Danube Convention had brought about a revival of river-borne traffic. During the conference itself there was hardly any traffic on the river. I saw only an occasional coal barge or river steamer.

CHAPTER IV

The Food Situation

ONCE the Danubian Conference was over the varied and excellent meals which were served every day were switched off like an electric light, and the real food situation was revealed in all its grimness.

During the conference the Majestic Hotel was reserved exclusively for the delegations and their staffs, correspondents and embassy officials. Members of the Yugoslav public were not allowed in, not even into the café.

While the conference was on you could choose between a dozen dishes for lunch or dinner and have good wine or beer with either or both. There were hors-d'oeuvre, caviare, soups, egg dishes of various kinds, a variety of fish, and the selection of meat included rump-steak, shashlik, veal, pork, ham, lamb and sausages of different kinds. Plenty of butter was put on the table automatically.

The food was correspondingly good at the two other restaurants where the majority of the visitors ate the 'Dva Ribara' or 'Two Fishermen', famous in prewar days for its shellfish, and the 'Takovski Grim', which we christened the 'Royal Oak'.

It was very expensive at all three, the meat dishes costing at least 130 dinars, or about 12s. 6d.

The first indication that the meals were just part of the display to impress the visitors was the disappearance of butter from the breakfast-table.

Then the kitchens at the Majestic Hotel closed for alterations, so no more meals were served there. This drove more people to the two remaining restaurants. The

quality and quantity of food served diminished, variety vanished, and the service of waiters became slapdash and careless. Dirty tablecloths were left on the tables. The waiters persisted in bringing dishes which had not been ordered and arguing the matter out.

The end of the conference was the signal for the general public to descend on the restaurants. They became crowded, particularly with visitors from the provinces. Sundays they were particularly full, but towards the end of the month the crowds thinned out as the wage packets thinned.

The Danubian Conference demonstrated that there was good food in the country. Where did it go? After the conference, I never saw pork, ham or bacon, in a country which is noted for its pig production.

Eggs, which are laid by the million and normally are exported, became scarce. Fresh fruit and vegetables were unobtainable and meat became a rarity.

I investigated the situation and discovered that some Yugoslavs got up at four o'clock in the morning to go to market and shop. In this way they got, if there were any, fresh fruit and vegetables and eggs direct from the peasants, who brought them from the country by ox and donkey cart. But they did not come every day and they did not bring large quantities. If you were not there early, you did not get anything or inferior quality.

In the country, foodstuffs are plentiful. The peasants let the fruit fall off the trees and rot on the ground. They are not killing their pigs and sending them to market. They claim that the prices fixed by the Government are too low and that they cannot afford to pay the wages fixed by the Government for farmhands. Transport and petrol to get the produce to the big towns are scarce and, where obtainable, expensive.

• In addition many of the peasants are eating more, a habit acquired during the war, when there was nothing else to do with the produce. There was always the danger of an enemy swoop on the farmyard.

The population of the big towns has been increased enormously as a result of the political reorganisation of the country into a federal republic. Each province in Yugoslavia now has its own autonomous government and its own parliament. Thus, in addition to the Central Government and the Central Parliament in Belgrade, there are six separate provincial cabinets and parliaments, one each for Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

This has swollen the bureaucracy enormously. Also the very nature of totalitarian Communism demands a big Civil Service to enforce the controls. In addition, many people are drifting to the towns in search of better jobs.

The Government is also trying to switch food from those provinces where there is a surplus to those where there is insufficient. It is difficult to tell whether this is proving successful, but lack of transport, apart from the reluctance of the peasant to sell his produce to the authorities at prices he considers uneconomic, makes it difficult to put into practice. The confusion caused by attempting such a scheme would add to the food shortage in the big towns.

Belgrade gossip is that food is scarce because it is being exported.

Tito has stated that Yugoslavia is importing food-stuffs, and at the same time as he made this statement to the Third Congress of the People's Front he denied that Yugoslavia was exporting farinaceous grains or fats.

The inference was that Yugoslavia is exporting certain foodstuffs, but which he did not specify.

This is the overall position in regard to food as explained by him: 'Fats were too scarce in the winter of 1948-9 to satisfy our own needs in the first and second quarters of this year and will continue to be scarce until we get the pigs which are now being fattened. Therefore, we had to import fats from abroad. We had to buy and we are still buying, 1,500 carloads of fats, in order to cover the first half of the year.

'Considering the existing domestic capacities, we are short of only 500 carloads of fats, but we shall have to import 1,500 carloads before our fats become available. However, we shall have to return 1,000 carloads, since otherwise this would greatly upset our balance of payment for various plants and machines.

'We are consuming today much more than we used to consume before the war. Thus, for instance, in 1948 173,963 tons of farinaceous grains were bought up, or 38.95 per cent more than in 1947, and all this will be consumed in our country by our working people.

'In the course of 1947, 71,240 tons of meat were bought up, and by the end of 1948, 102,430 tons, or 43.78 per cent more. In 1947, 111,720 tons or 57.39 per cent more. What does this mean? It means that our needs are on the increase, so is the standard of living.'

Tito revealed in his speech that the rationing system was not working so well. He said: 'It was discovered that in certain towns there were issued tens of thousands of ration cards more than there were inhabitants. In many villages and not the poorest ones, fifty to eighty per cent of the population received ration cards. Such an irresponsible and wasteful policy exhausted the State

food reserves to the detriment of those consumers who are entirely dependent on such supplies.

'On the other hand, when it was decided to carry out revision of the ration cards, that is, to deprive of ration cards those who do not need them, in some cases they were taken away from workers and working citizens who have no other means of obtaining supplies.

'This is being corrected by State intervention, but, nevertheless, it causes discontent among the people and it is to the detriment of the State as a whole.'

Tito's explanation of why Yugoslavia did not export wheat during 1948, when there was a good harvest, was that supplies are going to such regions as Lika, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Zagorje and Dalmatia, which before suffered from hunger throughout the year.

'Furthermore,' he said, 'the number of industrial workers has increased today by several hundreds of thousands, while the village population has decreased. Besides, those who are working and they are the largest number, are today receiving larger quantities of bread and other supplies more regularly than they did in the old Yugoslavia.'

He went on: 'Today we seriously lack meat of all kinds and we thus especially need cattle for slaughtering. The State has taken considerable steps for the raising of cattle and poultry of all kinds on State farms, but it is too little to compensate for the deficit in these agricultural products. It is for this reason that we have to take measures to buy up such products. These measures, of course, are not very pleasant, but we cannot abolish them this year yet.'

The food situation got so bad in 1948 that blue-uniformed armed militia made a four-day swoop on the farms and smallholdings of what the Yugoslav authori-

ties described as 'the rich peasantry'. This means anybody with an income of over 50,000 dinars a year, or about £250.

Operation 'Bacon' started in the early hours of the morning and came as a complete surprise. Official figures of the number of pigs seized were never issued. I applied to the Information Department, but they had none. Odd scraps of information were revealed as the swoop went on, such as: 'In Osijek, over 1,000 pigs were collected.' 'In Celje district, the collection commissions did not take away the livestock at once, but concluded contracts with the peasants.' 'Thanks to the intervention of the Ministry of Trade and Supply, this fault was at once corrected.' The official report claimed that the collection of pigs was completed in Macedonia in one day, while in Serbia it took two days.

There was never any mention of payment for the pigs. They were just seized and bundled off to quarantine. The number of peasants affected, according to official figures, was 8.2 per cent of Yugoslavia's population of 15 millions, or 1,500,000.

This round-up of potential breakfasts was turned to political advantage. In a four-column article in the organ of the Yugoslav Communist Party, *Borba*, Vlado Begovich wrote: 'This restricting and gradual process of elimination of capitalistic elements from the countryside and the helping of smaller and middle peasants is the keynote of our policy in the countryside.'

Then there came this significant sentence: 'From the foregoing, it can be seen how unfounded and unjustified is the statement by comrades from the Cominform that in our countryside there grow capitalistic elements and that the party in the countryside pays no heed to class differentiation.'

• 'This is how publicist Begovich justified the surprise round-up: 'Rich peasants, as producers, have full opportunity to work, but when they prevent work and the development of peasant co-operatives, when they attempt to use peasant co-operatives for their own benefit, when they exploit, speculate and hamper State measures for regulating markets and supplying the population, when they prevent and try to postpone the socialistic transformation of our agriculture, then the people's authorities under existing law undertake measures against them and the party, through the People's Front, mobilise the working peasants in the struggle against such tendencies.

'In this way, the class struggle in the countryside is developing, led and supervised by the party. It intends to fight down capitalistic elements, to help working peasants and put aside all barriers in the way of the socialistic transformation of agriculture. In this struggle, the ties between the working class and the working peasantry are strengthened as well as ties between the party and the working masses of the village and town.'

The official report explaining the raids after they had started said: 'A basic survey of the state of the fund of livestock has shown that the fund of pigs is great and that the greatest portion is to be found in the hands of the richer peasants. It has therefore been decided, and preparations have already been begun, for the greater portion of the pigs gathered in this action to be handed over to the socialist ownership of our State and of our agricultural and peasant producer co-operatives.

'Thus the State socialist sector will from now on be an important source of pig products and at the same time, by the development of pig-keeping in our agriculture and peasant producer co-operatives, an important step

will be carried out in the socialist reconstruction of the countryside.'

Vlajko Begovich seized the opportunity presented by the pig round-up to criticise the progress of socialisation in agriculture, compared with industry.

He wrote: 'Two-thirds of our population is in the countryside, which is therefore the main reservoir of working strength. But agriculture at present requires too much working strength.'

'In Yugoslavia, on an average, 114 persons work on 100 hectares of arable land, while in Czechoslovakia the figure is seventy, in France forty-three and in Canada eleven.'

The magnitude of the task facing the Tito regime in socialising agriculture on Russian lines is indicated by the fact that there are about two million peasant holdings, mainly small ones, and there are only 450 State farms, covering about 300,000 hectares.

The middle peasantry comprise 32.1 per cent of the population and have an income of between 16,000 and 50,000 dinars a year. The poorer peasantry constitute 59.7 per cent of the population, with an income of 16,000 dinars. The official rate of the dinar is 200 to the £.

Begovich summed up: 'This gradual process of elimination of capitalistic elements from the countryside and the helping of the smaller and middle peasants is the keynote of our policy in the countryside.'

There has been land reform in Yugoslavia. In 1945 the Tito regime fixed at 30 hectares the maximum amount of land which could be owned by any one person. For this purpose, a Ministry of Colonisation was established, and after one year's work the Ministry was abolished at the beginning of 1946.

It worked in this way. If a peasant owned 70 hectares of land, the Ministry took away 40, leaving him 30. Large estates were confiscated whole, if they belonged to what were described as 'speculators'. These were converted into State farms or broken up into small-holdings. The slogan at this stage in agricultural reform was 'Land to those who work it'.

The second stage was a Government campaign for the establishment of co-operatives. As part of this campaign, poor people were brought from Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia to the rich province of Voivodina and given the houses and estates of those Germans who fled with the retreating invader or who had been killed fighting alongside the invading Germans against the Yugoslavs. Each 'colonist' was given seven to eight acres, a house and a credit to buy cattle and household goods.

The third stage was the forcing of peasants to form collectives, accompanied by the seizure of produce, such as pigs.

Another action by the authorities which caused great resentment among the peasantry was the confiscation of the pipes used in the distilling of the Yugoslav national drink rakja, which is made from fermented plums.

It is a very strong but pure spirit, which every peasant distils and drinks. It is an excellent drink, with no after-effects, and it is very popular all over the country. The Government's action immediately sent all available stocks of rakja into storage. As soon as word spread through the countryside, the peasants hid their distilling apparatus, but the raids caused a hold-up in the distilling of rakja for quite a time and caused a shortage.

The Government has devised a very elaborate system in an attempt to compel the peasant to sell his produce

to the authorities. If he sells to the State co-operative, he gets a lower price than if he sold on the free market, but at the State co-operative he gets coupons, enabling him to buy boots, shoes, clothing, matches, cigarettes and manufactured goods. That is, if there are any boots, shoes, clothes, matches, cigarettes or manufactured goods available.

If a peasant has no coupons, he has to go to the nearest big town and lose probably a whole working day, but, on the other hand, in the big town he can sell his produce at a higher price on the free market.

I visited one of the Belgrade markets and saw one peasant with a load of beautiful grapes which he was selling. He was surrounded by a crowd of irate Belgrade housewives, one of whom had gone to fetch a militiaman. The housewives were claiming that the peasant was charging too much for the grapes and the militiaman was brought in to enforce the fixed price.

If you buy plums from a Government store, you pay 8 dinars a kilogram. From a peasant direct they would be 9 or 10 dinars a kilo. Peaches, and Yugoslav peaches are delicious, cost 16 dinars a kilo in the State store in Belgrade, 13 dinars in the village, but on the free market a peasant can get 20 dinars a kilo in Belgrade.

Cheese was between 70 and 100 dinars a kilo, according to quality, on the free market. When the price was fixed at 60 dinars, cheese disappeared. Milk is fixed at 9 dinars a litre and each child up to the age of fourteen has a milk card entitling him or her to a litre a day. Parents have to buy their milk on the free market, where it costs 20 dinars a litre, or do without.

Fixed price for butter is 160 dinars a kilo, compared with between 250 and 280 on the free market. Each child gets at least a quarter of a kilo a month at the fixed

price, sometimes half a kilo. Parents don't eat butter, unless they can afford the free market price.

Children up to the age of fourteen get 200 grammes of meat twice a week, or a total of 400 grammes weekly. A woman gets half a kilo a week and a man 800 grammes. The fixed price is between 48 and 54 dinars.

Bread is rationed and the price fixed at $5\frac{1}{2}$ dinars a kilo. A family of four, comprising mother, father and two children, get 1 kilo 550 grammes daily of bread made up of 80 per cent wheat flour and 20 per cent maize.

Potatoes are unrationed and cost 7 dinars a kilo. Chickens cost between 200 and 250 dinars a pair on the free market in Belgrade. On the free market in the provinces they cost 150 dinars a pair. Eggs never cost less than 7 dinars each in Belgrade. The highest they have been is 11 dinars. Onions are not rationed and cost 4 dinars a kilo.

Open wine is very scarce in Belgrade. The State undertakings have a monopoly and supply all the cafés, bars and restaurants. The best wine costs 40 dinars a litre in the provinces and 80 dinars in Belgrade. While most produce has shown a tendency to go down in price, wine has gone up.

CHAPTER V

The Five Year Plan

YUGOSLAVIA has not only a food problem. She has an economic problem of considerable magnitude. In an attempt to solve it, the Tito regime has passed a law enforcing a Five Year Plan for the development of the national economy. It is a very ambitious plan which, in my opinion, sets out to do too much at once. The regime is committed to its implementation and the big problem is how to do so.

To industrialise a country which is 80 per cent peasant is no easy matter at the best of times. There is always the innate hostility of the peasant towards the idea of being turned into a factory hand, apart from the difficulty of training youths rapidly to become artisans, mechanics, engineers, designers, pilots, scientists and architects.

The problem has been magnified in Yugoslavia by the devastation caused by the war against four invaders, the war against the chetniks of General Milhailovich, and the carrying out of a revolution, all at the same time.

In the process of waging this five-point war, the partisans blew up railways, bridges, telephone and telegraph poles and wires. Now, these same partisans, converted into the Government of Yugoslavia, are faced with the task of repairing the havoc they wrought so efficiently and building up a new Yugoslavia at the same time. A task of no mean order.

The Five Year Plan sets the pace for the Government and the people as a whole. The whole life and economy of the country is geared to the fulfilment of this elaborate project.

It covers industry and agriculture and sets some very ambitious targets. It is so ambitious that I am convinced that it will be impossible of achievement without help from the West, and even with help from the West I doubt whether the targets set can be achieved.

It does not stop short even of trying to speed up sex and make it more efficient. Under the heading of agriculture and forestry, one of the targets set is 'To increase the yield of staple crops and the reproductive capacity of cattle'.

Another section plans 'extensive measures for combating sterility in mares and cows'. It does not, however, specify what penalties will be imposed if the bulls, mares and cows fail to achieve their set targets.

The basic principle of the Yugoslav Five Year Plan is different from that of the Russian Five Year Plan. In the Yugoslav Plan, the peasant has equal status with the factory worker, instead of it being definitely laid down that the industrial worker shall enjoy preferential treatment, as in Russia.

The Chairman of the Federal Planning Commission at the time the Five Year Plan was submitted to the National Assembly was Andrija Hebrang, who is now in jail, having been expelled from the Communist Party.

He told the National Assembly on 26th April 1947: 'While recognising the leading role of industry, we are far from neglecting agriculture. We give equal consideration to agriculture and industry. They represent the two branches of our economy which are mutually complementary and which aid each other. The one cannot progress rapidly if the other lags far behind.

'The relationship between industry and agriculture as represented by the working peasant has radically changed in the new Yugoslavia. In the past capitalist

industry exploited the peasants. An end has been put to this. It is the task of our socialist industry to aid the development of agriculture, to supply the peasants with agricultural tools, machinery, artificial fertilisers, plant-protection chemicals and consumers' goods. On the other hand, the task of agriculture is to increase and improve production, to provide foodstuffs for the population and to supply industry with raw materials. For this reason, it is only enemies of the people who in the new Yugoslavia of today can desire to set village against town, agriculture against industry, the working peasant against the factory worker.'

To carry out the Five Year Plan as approved by Parliament means subjecting Yugoslavia to five years more of life under conditions similar to those obtaining under wartime operations. Instead of slackening off after the efforts of the war, the Plan calls on the people of Yugoslavia for further efforts and sacrifices.

Implementation of the Five Year Plan means that Yugoslavia is being run on a wartime basis, with none of the patriotic fervour to act as an incentive. There is no place in the Five Year Plan for luxuries or things to make life more pleasant. It is a severely practical, utilitarian plan to make Yugoslavia economically independent.

This is the situation which the Plan is designed to tackle, as set out by Hebrang in Parliament. Before the war, Yugoslavia ranked among the most backward countries in Europe. In 1939 she produced per inhabitant 389 kilograms of coal, although Rumania and Bulgaria both produced less; 6 kilograms of iron, which put Yugoslavia at the bottom of the list with Rumania; 15 kilograms of steel, with only Rumania lagging after her; 71 kilowatts per hour of electric power, in the production

of which Bulgaria was the only country producing less; .06 kilograms of oil, in which Yugoslavia was last; 42.5 kilograms of cement, Hungary and Czechoslovakia being the only two countries to lag behind Yugoslavia.

The situation in agriculture was similar, with primitive cultivation of land coupled with the low yield per hectare. The average yield per hectare amounted to: Wheat, 11.3 metric quintals, with only Rumania producing less; potatoes, 61 metric quintals, the lowest in Europe; sugar-beet, 180 metric quintals, only Rumania producing less; consumption of artificial fertilisers per hectare, 0.3 kilograms, lowest in Europe; yield of milk per cow per annum, 900 litres, the lowest in Europe; yield of wheat per inhabitant, 155 kilograms, with Hungary and Bulgaria alone producing less.

Hebrang described prewar Yugoslavia in these terms: 'Not only was our agriculture equipped with wooden ploughs, but our industry also had a technical equipment of machinery corresponding to the primitive wooden plough in agriculture and methods of work on a similar level.

'In many respects, the centuries and the revolutions in technique had passed us by. Up to the liberation of our country, the Idria mercury mine on the Slovene littoral employed machinery dating from the time of Napoleon.

'From the Jezerina mine in Kosovo and Metohija, 8,200 tons of chromium ore a year were extracted by hand. The ore was carried by packhorse for 6 kilometres and then transported a further 25 kilometres in bullock-carts to the nearest railway. Some of our blast furnaces with 200 workers produced 100 tons of pig iron in twenty-four hours. Modern blast furnaces with forty-five workers produce 500 tons in the same time. The time necessary for the manufacture of an electric motor

in the Sever factory in Subotica was twenty times that necessary in factories with up-to-date technical equipment.'

Faced with such an industrial and agricultural situation, the Plan sets out to increase the value of industrial production five times by 1951, compared with 1939, increasing it from 3,378 dinars per inhabitant to 10,625 dinars per inhabitant.

The share of industrial production in the country's total production is to be increased from 45 per cent in 1939 to 64 per cent in 1951. The total value of production in 1951 is to be 2.4 times prewar production.

The sum of 120 million dinars is to be invested in the industrialisation and electrification of the country, the building of hundreds of new factories, and scores of power stations, the opening up of new mines and the reconstruction and modernisation of old ones.

Production in the metal industries is to be seven times the 1939 level, building material over eight times, the chemical industry over nine times and the electrical industry over ten times.

It is planned to increase the production of sugar to more than twice the 1939 figure, lard 1.5 times, vegetable oils three times, meat products nine times, tinned fish 5.5 times, pastes over seventeen times, tinned fruit sixteen times, textiles more than twice, footwear 2.5 times and household furnishings over four times.

The national income is to be increased from 132,000 million dinars in 1939 to 255,000 million dinars in 1951. The circulation of retail goods is to be increased from 55,000 million dinars in 1946 to 102,000 million dinars in 1951.

The sum of 55,700 million dinars is to be invested by 1951 by the State in the construction of dwellings, hospi-

tals, convalescent homes, schools and cultural institutions.

Altogether, 278,300 million dinars are to be invested in the national economy between 1947 and 1951, and the value of total production is to be increased from 116,500 million dinars in 1939 to 266,700 million dinars in 1951.

The plan calls for the manufacture of goods which have never before been manufactured in Yugoslavia, such as tractors, bicycles and typewriters. The targets are 1,500 tractors, 50,000 bicycles and 10,000 typewriters by 1951.

There is no reference to the production of such articles as tanks, machine guns, rifles and warplanes. It is, however, planned to increase the number of planes to 4.8 times the figure of 1946 and to increase the number of air lines by 2.6 times in the home service and four times in the foreign service. Ten airports are to be built.

The Plan calls for an increase in the number of skilled workers from 350,000 in 1946 to 750,000 in 1951. This is to be achieved by increasing the number of apprentices in economy and directing them through the labour agencies into the most important branches of economy, and also by the maximum recruitment of women into industry.

The target for oil production is fantastic. In 1939, 1,000 tons of crude oil were mined. By 1951 it is planned to mine 450,000 tons. Petrol is to be increased from 4,000 tons in 1946 to 75,000 tons in 1951. Synthetic petrol is to be produced and the target is 20,000 tons by 1951.

Coal production is to be increased from 6,068,000 tons in 1939 to 16,500,000 tons in 1951. The production of manganese ore is to be increased 1,150 per cent,

the production of pig iron 545 per cent, the production of lead 591 per cent, aluminium oxide 730 per cent, aluminium 732 per cent, machine tools 7,500 per cent and railway wagons 28,947. That really is twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and forty seven per cent; it is not a comma by mistake in place of a point.

The percentages are in thousands; there is no misprint. So it goes on, in every field of industry and production.

The agricultural part of the plan is not quite so ambitious, inasmuch as it is not planned to increase livestock by thousands per cent, but by hundreds per cent. Thus, horses are to be increased 91 per cent, cattle 116, pigs 171, sheep 146, poultry 140, meat 117, fat 153, milk 145, wool 150, eggs 176.

Grain production is to be increased 113 per cent, sugar beet 374 per cent, cotton 1,028 per cent, sunflower 770 per cent, soya beans 1,550 per cent, potatoes 172, and the total number of fruit trees is to be increased 99 per cent.

Inside this overall plan, each of the six separate republics making up the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro—has its own Five Year Plan. From these, it is seen that the 50,000 bicycles and the 10,000 typewriters which Yugoslavia is to manufacture will all be produced in Slovenia. Slovenia is also called upon to manufacture 3,500 tons of hydraulic machinery by 1951, compared with 28 in 1939.

Serbia is to increase coal production 492 per cent, Bosnia and Herzegovina 398 per cent, Croatia 241 per cent, Slovenia 137 per cent and Macedonia 313 per cent. So it goes on through each branch of production.

The Five Year Plan covers every aspect of life:

housing (war destroyed and dilapidated dwelling-houses are to be repaired and 15,000,000 square metres of new dwelling-houses are to be built at a cost of 30,000 million dinars), education (5,900 million dinars are to be spent on building a million square metres of schools, providing for 320,000 more pupils and providing a seven-year school course for 60 per cent of the children of school age), public health (5,400 million dinars are to be spent on building hospitals, increasing first-aid stations, dispensaries and clinics and social insurance, although no details are given of the way in which the social insurance is to work), trade and supply—the rationing of food and industrial products is to be abolished as production increases and the network of State commercial warehouses and wholesale stores is to be extended.

It is the realisation of this Plan which is threatened by the Cominform and Russian economic blockade of Yugoslavia.

It is this plan to which Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party are committed. It can only be implemented, even partially, with help from the West. Otherwise it will be nothing more than a dream, and Yugoslavia will remain an agricultural country with a magnificent war record.

CHAPTER VI

Life In Belgrade

COMMUNISM has made Belgrade dull, grim and unsociable. Everything has been nationalised, hotels, shops, cinemas and theatres. They are all run by the State. Even the little studios which take your photograph for the innumerable forms you have to fill in are under State control. The only people who are not Civil Servants are the craftsmen.

When the Danubian Conference was over I moved from the Balkan Hotel to the Moskva. There was plenty of room in the Moskva. The departure of the delegates had left the place empty. The manager was quite agreeable to my moving in. But that was not possible, just yet.

The hotel is run by the State and comes under the jurisdiction of the State travel agency, Putnik. So I had to go round and see the Director of Putnik and get his permission to move into the Moskva. His name was Yovanovich. He was charming and created no difficulties whatever. He picked up the telephone and told the manager of the Moskva that it was all right for me to have a room.

Then it was possible for me to move in. The first thing the manager asked me for was my passport, in order to send it round to the secret police, in accordance with the regulations. I could not let him have it, as I had handed it over to the Information Department for them to get me a visa to stay in Belgrade. He was very upset, although, belonging to the old school of hotelier, he was polite.

I told him where my passport was and that I would

show it to him when I got it back from the Information Department.

It was, meanwhile, impossible for me to obtain any money, as a passport has to be shown when exchanging money. I had to borrow money for my meals during those days of waiting. This was not very easy, as nobody had any money to spare in Belgrade. On one or two days I had to skip meals. Fortunately, I had bought a box of chocolate bars in Frankfurt on my way, and this helped to keep me going until my passport was returned and I was able to go along to the bank and get some money.

Soap presented another problem. As a guest for the Danubian Conference, I was allowed a small tablet of soap at the Balkan Hotel. I was moving to what is considered the best hotel in Belgrade and therefore had every reason to expect that I would get a similar tablet there. So, when I moved, I gave the tablet of soap, a little worn, to the porter who helped me carry my bag. He was overwhelmed. I found out later why. It was worth its weight in gold.

For when I unpacked in the Moskva and rang for the chambermaid to bring me some soap, she was horrified. The conference was over and everybody had to come down to earth. She maintained that they did not get any toilet soap, only soap for washing the laundry. I pointed out that I was now classified as a tourist, as distinct from a special correspondent reporting the Danubian Conference, and the hotel must get a quota of soap for tourists.

But no, there was no toilet soap. However, after a while she relented and offered to get me some as soon as she could, but it would take time. It took several days, during which time I washed with toothpaste.

The theory apparently is that foreigners bring their own supplies of toilet articles and those that do not, get

them from their embassy. Foreigners do not come under the rationing scheme. They cannot buy rationed goods in the shops, as they have no ration books or coupons.

Therefore, after a prolonged stay, it is essential to leave Yugoslavia and go to either Trieste or Italy, to buy clothing and toilet articles, or organise a system for the supply of the necessary goods from England or the United States.

The hotel staff was constantly changed. The conference was over and there was no need to impress anybody. The two charming and efficient telephone operators disappeared and were replaced by a boy with a Teutonic haircut who had not the slightest idea of how to operate a switchboard. If he did, he was possessed of a sabotage complex, for his favourite trick was to connect the call and then pull out the plug as soon as the caller began to speak.

There was chaos every time anybody tried to get a phone call abroad, so a woman was sent along. But she could only speak Russian. Nobody could understand her, Yugoslavs included. Representations were made to the authorities and eventually an experienced switchboard operator was brought in.

The sole remaining waiter was transferred to the job of errand boy as soon as he had become a useful waiter. The explanation given was that the hotel was being used as a training-ground for people to learn the hotel business. This meant that no sooner did a person learn his job, than he was transferred to another job or another floor.

It was a comfortable, well-appointed hotel. My suite had a bathroom with shower and hot water. There were all the press buttons from pre-1939 days, but pressing them did not produce the array of staff that normally

responds to bellpushes of this type in hotels of the Moskva type.

Getting breakfast, which was the only meal it was possible to eat in the hotel, was no mean feat. Whoever prepared the breakfast was determined that I should have what he wanted me to have and not what I had ordered.

Thus, if I ordered fried eggs, he sent them up in a wineglass, but not fried, soft-boiled. If I ordered an omelette, he sent a fried egg. There was no way of telling what would come. It gave a touch of the unexpected to the meal, and eventually I gave up dressing down the waiter and meekly ate my boiled eggs out of a wine glass.

If I placed a standing order for the same breakfast every day at a given time, in order to simplify matters, they would bring the breakfast either much too early when I was fast asleep and leave it on the table to get cold or bring it much too late and make me late for appointments. There is no dining-room in the Moskva.

Cinemas are popular with young and old in the New Communist Yugoslavia. There are queues for most performances. Communism has not eliminated the liking for film entertainment, and although most of the films shown are Russian, full of exploits of the Russian revolution and Russia's expulsion of the Nazi invaders, the queues are longest for British and American films.

The longest queue was for *Great Expectations*. Belgrade liked this British film, which was shown during the Danubian Conference. But not many British films are shown in Yugoslavia. There is plenty of room for British films, as the Yugoslav film industry is in its infancy and mainly confines itself to producing propaganda films around the construction of such things as

railways or the working of a mine.

The British Council, in its efforts to spread an appreciation of the British way of life, puts on a very good weekly film show, sixteen millimetre, in the British Reading Room. Popular films are screened. No propaganda is inflicted on the audiences, who pay for admission, just as at the Yugoslav cinemas. But very few Yugoslavs go. They are afraid of being classified as pro-Western.

This fear is very real. As a result, it is extraordinarily difficult to get a Yugoslav to work for a non-Yugoslav employer.

The National Theatre, which was in existence before Communism came, is very good. I saw a very amusing comedy there, *The Minister's Wife*, written long before the war. It is a delightful skit on Yugoslav politics and made the audience roar at the antics of the wife of the newly appointed Cabinet Minister in her efforts to live up to her new position.

Perhaps the play was allowed because the authorities thought it showed the decadence of prewar politics. I don't think the audience looked at it in that light.

The open-air theatre at Topcider, a few miles outside the capital, is in a stone quarry carved out of a hillside and is the summer home of ballet and opera. The Concert Bureau of the Committee of Culture and Fine Arts put on a four-act ballet, *The Legend of Lake Ochrid*, during the Danubian Conference and invited all the delegates and correspondents.

This stage version of a colourful legend of the frontier-raid days was well done. The dancing and the music were good. The costumes were vivid and graceful.

On a later occasion, when the conference was over, I went to see *Carmen* there and found the place packed.

Hundreds were standing. Most of the audience were in their shirtsleeves, the night was so hot.

The social life of Belgrade centres round the cafés, where more and more women are to be seen. Families and friends spend the evening talking and arguing politics over a glass of rakja or beer.

There is very little entertaining in postwar Yugoslavia. The shortage of drinks and foodstuffs makes it almost impossible, even if the inclination to entertain in such a grim atmosphere were there.

The young people of postwar Yugoslavia are not having much fun. There is little to laugh or joke about. There is little in the way of sport, apart from swimming in the Danube and the Sava. Yugoslav youth has no bicycle on which to ride out into green and leafy lanes.

There are some hard tennis courts in the Kalimakdan Park, where the old Turkish fort still stands, a reminder of the past, but few people have tennis rackets and those that have have no tennis balls or shoes.

Basketball is a popular Sunday game and football is gaining ground. But even in this politics is having its influence. The Cominform countries will not play Yugoslav teams.

There is little scope for reading, as the bookshops are filled with Communist propaganda. There is no fiction. One of the favourite pastimes for the youth of Belgrade is to walk up and down the Marshal Tito Avenue on a Sunday or stroll in the Kalimakdan Park. The Sunday processions of singing youths stopped with the end of the Danubian Conference. There was no longer anyone to impress.

Over all there hangs the threat of the secret police, for there are 100,000 political prisoners in Yugoslavia, of whom about 30,000 are in Serbia. They include

thousands of women. The women's prison at Pozerevatz, in Serbia, alone holds about 3,000.

Many of the political prisoners are under sentence of forced labour. I saw one batch being marched through the streets of Belgrade from the building site where they worked, under armed guard, to a canteen for their mid-day meal. They were escorted by blue-uniformed militia guards and looked like convicts. They were dressed like convicts, in drab grey pyjama-like costumes of hairy cloth, and walked like men who had given up all hope.

The two political prisoners about whom there is constant interest and speculation, in private, are Andrija Hebrang, former Minister of Industry and President of the Economic Council, who was Chairman of the Federal Planning Commission when the Five Year Plan was submitted to the National Assembly, and Sreten Zujovich, a former member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

Both have been expelled from the Yugoslav Communist Party and have been in jail for over a year. They have not been tried and there are no indications yet that they will be tried. If and when they do go on trial, the case will be a *cause célèbre*, as both are believed to have supplied the information on the basis of which the Moscow Bolshevik Committee accused Tito of deviationism from the party line.

Both were expelled from the Yugoslav Communist Party after a party commission had investigated their alleged anti-party activities.

Against Hebrang the commission made sixteen accusations, the principal ones being that he hindered the Five Year Plan from being brought out on time, that he maintained repressive measures must be taken against peasants as soon as difficulties are met with, which is the

Russian method of getting peasants to produce food, and that he attempted to carry out an economic policy of State capitalism.

The commission claimed to hold documents proving that Hebrang worked for the Ustasha police. They held that after Hebrang's arrest by the Ustasha a series of arrests occurred in the party organisation in Croatia which was connected with the betrayal by Hebrang; also that Hebrang was exchanged under totally suspicious circumstances in 1942, 'which is a unique case in our country'.

The report stated that Hebrang was punished in 1941 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party by admonition for lack of vigilance regarding attempts to break up the unity of the party and for not carrying out the directives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party regarding the organisation of a general people's uprising; that in 1944 he was removed from the post of secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Croatia for chauvinist behaviour toward the Serbs in Croatia.

There were fourteen accusations against Zujovich, including one that he railed against and slandered Tito during the National Liberation Struggle and after the liberation, in front of the staff of the First Proletarian Division, in front of members of the staff of the Sandzak Brigade, as well as at a plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

He was also accused of hindering the fulfilment of the Five Year Plan and rendering impossible the establishment of normal trading relations with other countries, 'had a nationalistic attitude towards the republics' and 'resisted the reorganisation of the economic administration'.

The commission's investigation of Zujovich's record went back to 1937, when he was expelled from the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the dissolution of the Central Committee.

The commission attached to their findings the decision of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in an investigation carried out into the activities of Hebrang and Zujovich in 1946.

This investigation was into a letter which Hebrang wrote in which he accused Tito of cherishing a personal animus against him.

The Politbureau on this occasion found: 'In the letter, Comrade Hebrang, in a manner which is unhealthy and impermissible within the Party, suspects Comrade Tito of not tolerating him personally because he (Hebrang) also received a telegram from Moscow and that accordingly the distrust which Comrade Tito has for the economic policy of Comrade Hebrang originates from this.

'The behaviour of Comrade Hebrang at the session of the Central Committee of April 19th of that year was not auto-critical and confirms that in his letter it is not a matter of a personal conflict with Comrade Tito, but rather of an attempt to transfer the political difference between Comrade Tito as bearer of the policy of the Central Committee and Comrade Hebrang to a personal level and to introduce an incorrect relationship into the Central Committee and an impermissible method into work.'

The Politbureau on this occasion found: 'The behaviour of Comrade Zujovich at the session of the Central Committee of 19th April of that year, regarding the letter of Comrade Hebrang, was not only conciliatory

but actually meant support for Hebrang in his unhealthy attitude toward the Central Committee and toward Comrade Tito, both in regard to the internal relationship within the Central Committee and to the mistaken economic and financial policy.'

The Politbureau adopted the recommendation of the investigation commission that Hebrang should be removed from work in the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and withdraw from his position as Minister of Industry in the Federal Government and president of the Economic Council.

The investigating commission considered that he should be allowed to remain in his position of president of the Planning Commission.

No recommendations were made in the case of Zujovich.

The extent of the hold of Cominformism, which is only another name for Stalin-Communism, is revealed occasionally by the Yugoslav authorities.

Thus Croatia has had a purge of pro-Cominform elements. Out of a total of 84,649 members, 597 were expelled from the Croatian Communist Party between November 1948 and June 1949, that is, over a period of seven months. The official announcement does not say what happened to those expelled, but the usual procedure is that they lose their jobs and go to jail.

This total of 597 is not the total of expulsions, but merely of those expelled for pro-Cominform activities. Another 1,165 members were expelled for such reasons as 'an opportunist attitude towards agricultural co-operatives'.

All these political prisoners, Hebrang, Zujovich and the 100,000 others, are languishing in jail as a result of

the ruthless, efficient machine created by a modest, unassuming former tailor, Alexander Rankovich, the power behind Tito, who keeps very much in the background. His job is to make sure that nobody assassinates Tito.

For Rankovich, about whom little is heard in Yugoslavia and even less outside, who rarely makes a public appearance or a speech, is the Minister of Interior and controller of the OZNA or secret police, which he created during the War of National Liberation. He is the man who captured Draja Mihailovich. How he did it is the best-kept secret in Yugoslavia today.

As Minister of Interior, he announced in the National Assembly on 23rd March 1946 that Draja Mihailovich had been captured in a cave near the town of Vishegrad on the old frontier between Serbia and Bosnia by the secret police. That was all. Nothing more has been revealed since.

OZNA, which is the popular name for the secret police, is made up of the initials of the words Odeljenja Zashtite Naroda, which mean Department for the Protection of the State. Its agents still strike terror into the hearts of the Yugoslavs, particularly when they come along in the middle of the night, their favourite hour, and ask their victim to get out of bed and accompany them to headquarters.

The creator of this instrument of terror is a widower, who lives alone in a modest three-roomed flat in the centre of Belgrade. His wife was killed fighting with the partisans and he has no children. A quiet man, with a broad peasant face, dark hair, clean-shaven and of medium height, Alexander Rankovich is noted for his seriousness. He dresses quietly, simply, in what is known in Belgrade as the English style. He still maintains

friendly relations with the man who taught him his job as tailor.

Rankovich was born in 1909, the son of poor peasant parents, in the village of Drazevatz, in the district of Posavina, about thirty miles from Belgrade, on the banks of the River Sava. He was left an orphan after the first world war and went to Belgrade at the age of ten, to learn to become a tailor.

He specialised in the making of peasant national costumes, decorated with filigree work, which before the war cost anything up to 6,000 dinars, or about thirty pounds. He joined the progressive youth movement known as Skoj in 1927 and quickly revealed his powers of leadership and organising ability. He became a prominent trade union official in his own particular trade branch, known in Serb as Abadjija.

In this capacity, he waged active underground warfare against the regime of King Alexander. One of the first to be arrested by the political police, he was the first to be put on trial. While awaiting trial in Glavnjacha jail in Belgrade, he was beaten up, but did not give away any of his comrades. He was brought for trial before the State Protection Court and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in the Sremska Mitrovica State prison, about sixty miles from Belgrade.

While in jail he continued to wage his underground campaign against the dictatorship, and in 1935 he was released under a general amnesty. Soon after his release he was called upon to do his compulsory military service, during which period he was closely watched on account of his political views.

After completing his military service, he returned to Belgrade, where he continued his underground political work, and in 1937 he became head of Skoj. He fell into

the hands of the German Gestapo in autumn 1941, while organising the struggle against the occupation forces. He was beaten up in jail and taken to Vidinska Street Hospital, unconscious. There Mitra Mitrovich-Djilas, the attractive young wife of Milovan Djilas, was a patient. Rankovich got a message to her and she contacted the anti-Fascist underground. A raid was organised on the hospital and Rankovich was kidnapped in his pyjamas. He was taken to a nearby barber's shop, where the barber supplied him with a suit of clothes and a shave. Then he went underground.

During the German occupation of Yugoslavia, Rankovich was a member of the supreme military headquarters staff and one of Tito's closest collaborators. Possessed of inexhaustible energy and drive, he worked tirelessly on the reorganisation of the Yugoslav army and the building up of the National Liberation Movement. In recognition of his contribution to the struggle against the Germans, he was decorated with the Orders of Suvorov and Kutuzov first class and was pronounced a national hero. He thus entered the ranks of one of the most exclusive bodies in Yugoslavia, totalling twenty living members.

He became Minister of Interior on 1st February 1946, when Tito reconstructed his Cabinet and replaced Vlado Zechevich. His headquarters are in the former Ministry of National Health building, near the British Embassy.

Stepping-stones in his career are: Member of Skopje from 1927, member of the Communist Party from 1928, Member of Parliament for Belgrade and his home town in the Constituent Assembly and member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

He is one of the Big Four who have come under fire from Moscow.

CHAPTER VII

They Live In Darkness

THERE is no freedom of the Press in Yugoslavia. The attitude of the authorities towards the Press is one of complete contempt.

The Yugoslav newspapers and radio are both parts of a vast bureaucratic totalitarian Communist machine to keep the people of Yugoslavia ignorant of what is going on inside their own country and what is going on in the outside world. It is a useful instrument for dinning into them the propaganda which the authorities wish them to accept as facts.

There is no freedom of comment and no freedom to collect and publish factual news. Comment and news are both strictly controlled by the Yugoslav Communist Party. Thus, as far as the Yugoslav newspapers and radio are concerned, the people of Yugoslavia are living in perpetual darkness.

Nothing favourable to the Western countries is published. Very little is published about the 'warmongering, imperialistic, capitalistic countries of the West' that is not definitely unfavourable.

During the UNO sessions in Paris in 1943, Ernie Bevin got ten lines on one occasion. That was the only reference to the Western powers that got into print. The American delegates were not even mentioned. The Yugoslav Foreign Minister got the whole of the front page when he made a speech supporting the Soviet disarmament proposal.

Even during the Danubian Conference, when Belgrade was full of foreigners and as host it was expected that the Yugoslavs would put on a show, the Yugoslav news-

papers failed to rise to their responsibilities. They slavishly followed the party line. They made no attempt to report the proceedings. The Belgrade morning papers only published a very short summary of Sir Charles Peake's speech in which he summarised the British point of view to the Soviet draft convention.

Nor was there any mention of the passage in which he said: 'My government cannot admit that any Power can arrogate to itself the position of arbiter over the rights of others. There are Soviet troops in most of the territory through which the Danube flows. The Soviet Government is in a position to prevent other Powers from using these stretches of the Danube, but this unilateral and arbitrary action does not cancel the rights of those Powers.'

They published the full text of Vyshinsky's speech, together with pictures of Vyshinsky and Vyshinsky with Bebler.

During the summer tension over Berlin in 1948, the only reference in the Belgrade newspapers to the submission of the Berlin situation to the Security Council was a sentence in a dispatch from Tanjug's Paris correspondent. No paper commented on the matter.

Anything that can be construed as unfavourable to the Western powers is published, but nothing favourable. All the foreign news items that are published in the Yugoslav newspapers are issued by Tanjug, the official Government news agency.

This is a typical day's foreign news report, put out by Tanjug on 16th August 1948:

Security Council: Yugoslav memorandum on Trieste.

Jerusalem: Jewish General Staff say Arabs started general attack along the whole Jerusalem front.

Poland: New York, Tass reports the establishment of

a Security Council Commission for ordinary armament.

New York: Tanjug reports Henry Wallace nominated candidate for Progressive Party.

London: Tanjug quotes *Daily Worker* on Burma.

New Delhi: Tass reports that in the United Provinces, thirty-two Moslems have been arrested charged with anti-Indian agitation.

New York: Associated Press reports that today's *New York Herald Tribune* says the Truman Government has prepared a new law against alleged espionage allowing control of private telephone talks.

Prague: Tanjug reports increased prices in July.

Ottawa: Tass reports a certain number of Canadian papers say U.S. War Minister Forrestal arrived in Canada to conduct military negotiations.

Tokio: Tass says that according to the news agency Kiodo preparations are in progress for a revision of the Japanese constitution with veto of MacArthur's general staff.

Sydney: Associated Press summarises a speech by the secretary of the Communist Party, threatening to intervene with the aim of stopping the fight against the Malayan people.

Agence New China gives details of achievements by guerrillas.

Sofia: The Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency reports preparations for the International Fair which opens at Plovdiv on 29th this month.

Hamburg: Agence France Presse reports that the British Military Government has taken the necessary measures throughout the British zone of Germany for all German citizens to deposit works of art and artistic objects taken or stolen from various occupied countries during the war.

Budapest: The Hungarian Telegraphic Agency reports that the Minister of Justice has issued a list of 319 political prisoners involved in the last amnesty.

Helsinki: Agence France Presse reports that the Trade Union of Transport Workers has passed a resolution to start a general strike.

New York: Tass reports that the U.S. Press says nothing about citizen Kosian Kinove, who is still in hospital.

Moscow: Tass reports the reconstruction of Russian towns.

Rome: Tanjug reports that metal production dropped 179 per cent from May to June.

Vienna: Tanjug reports that Yugoslavia's political delegation in Austria handed a note to the Allied Control Commission asking for an explanation and help in the recovery of certain very important documents.

Athens: Summary of Free Greece radio station on repeated attacks by monarcho-fascists in the Pindus Mountains.

Moscow: Tass reports over 1,000 new schools have been built before the beginning of the new school year.

Geneva: Tass reports on the session of the Economic and Social Council that discussion began on the question of international work organisation.

Teheran: Tass reports that twenty Iran pilots recently sent to the U.S. occupation zone of Germany returned to Teheran bringing with them new military equipment.

Athens: Agence France Presse reports that the P.T.T. syndicate has decided to start a strike in spite of the forced mobilisation of hostile workers.

Hague: Tass reports that colonial courts in Java continue to pass death sentences on members of the National Liberation Movement.

Leningrad: A group of Soviet archaeologists have finished the first part of the excavation of the old city of Staraye Lagoda.

The Home News report for the same day carried the following items:

Special item No. 1 three foolscap pages report on the plenum of the Mining Council.

Special item from Split on the celebration of the people's uprising in Dalmatia, in which 10,000 participated.

Kolaraz University alterations. Chess tournament. Boxing championship. Basket ball. Co-operative craftsmen.

Propaganda in the newspapers has made the Yugoslavs afraid to mix with Westerners. They fear that they will be reported as having been seen in the company of 'So-and-so, that well-known warmongering imperialist', for the Communists take their propaganda very seriously. Perhaps that is why Communists are so completely devoid of humour. They take it so seriously that many of them believe it. It means that members of the party have abdicated their right to think for themselves and blindly follow and believe the gospel according to St. Marx.

There is not much choice for them anyway, as the newspapers do not print any news even about events in Yugoslavia. They are filled with boring, lengthy articles, full of Marxian dialectics, lengthy resolutions of support for the Tito Government from local Communist Parties and speeches by Communist Party leaders.

For the past twelve months the front pages have been dominated by the Cominform squabble and endless arguments designed to prove that the Yugoslavs are better Communists than the people of the Cominform countries.

Tito's movements and activities are reported after the event. There is never any advance news item to the effect, for example, that he is to visit such and such a town to inspect the schools.

Speeches by good Communists are published as much as five days after delivery, the intervening period having been taken up with conferences to decide how much the public shall be told of what he said.

For the Yugoslav Communist Party, as all Communist parties, is very much alive to the fact that what is good for home consumption may not be good for foreign consumption. Therefore care has to be exercised to make sure that if one of the comrades says something rude about Russia before the party has decided that the time has come to be rude to Russia, it does not appear in print. The same applies to any remarks that may be made about Tito.

Even official information and announcements are controlled with a rigidity that is ludicrous. Thus, when the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a note to another government, the text is made available to Tanjug and Tanjug teleprints the text to the various newspapers. The newspapers do not get a copy of the note. Tanjug also broadcasts the note to the world at large.

As a result of this deliberate policy of muzzling the Press, more and more Yugoslavs are listening in to the BBC and the Voice of America broadcasts, to find out what is going on in the outside world. This is particularly so during periods of tension, such as over Berlin.

The BBC bulletins are particularly appreciated. The wartime broadcasts to Yugoslavia are remembered, for in those days Yugoslavs felt that they had the whole world

against them with the exception of Russia, and Russia was very far away.

Yugoslavs anxious to find out what is going on in the outside world can do so by going into the British and American reading-rooms, where the newspapers of both countries are on view, but not many take advantage of the opportunity, mainly through fear of being classified as pro-Western.

The British and American Embassies both issue a daily roncoed bulletin. The British bulletin contains the BBC news summary and translations of the Yugoslav newspapers and it is very useful to the diplomatic corps and foreign colony in general.

The American bulletin is composed exclusively of news from the outside world. However, these have little circulation outside the foreign colonies, as the Yugoslav authorities put difficulties in the way of extending the circulation to Yugoslavs who understand English.

There is no freedom and no facilities for foreign correspondents in Yugoslavia. They are allowed to travel a radius of about ten miles outside of Belgrade without a permit. They are stopped on the road by blue-uniformed militia and carefully inspected, even when travelling this short distance. For any greater distance, a written permit is needed.

I wanted to make a tour of Yugoslavia, and asked the head of the Information Department, Velizar Savich, for a *laissez-passer*, so that I could circulate freely through the towns and villages without being hauled up every so often by the blue-uniformed militia.

He told me that was impossible. He said that I had to submit my proposed route and then a permit would be issued. I would have to keep to my route, and before I left, the appropriate authorities would be warned that I

was coming. The appropriate authorities in this case were the security police.

Diplomats are allowed to travel outside the capital more or less freely, but even so, they get held up by the militia, who carefully inspect their papers before allowing them to continue on their journey.

Foreign correspondents are expected to write propaganda about Yugoslavia and nothing else. The Yugoslav officials in charge of Press matters are quite open about it. They come under the authority of the Information Department, headed by young, bespectacled, deceptively mild-mannered Velizar Savich.

They closely watch the writings of a foreign correspondent and soon classify him as hostile or friendly. There is no censorship, but the official news agency Tanjug sends back to Belgrade dispatches published abroad which are of interest to Yugoslavia, so that if anything classified as hostile or as criticism is published abroad, the Yugoslav authorities in Belgrade soon get to know about it.

Very soon after the end of the Danubian Conference, I had my first brush with the authorities. I was summoned to the Information Department and carpeted like a naughty schoolboy by a youth named Ivkovich, who was deputising for the department chief, at that moment on holiday.

He asked me if I had sent a story about the Deputy Chief of the Yugoslav Air Force, General Krsta Popivoda, escaping to Rumania. I said that I had done so. I asked him if he denied it. He said he did not want to give the story the importance of a denial. I asked him if he would produce General Popivoda and let me interview him and cable his interview. He said he did not want to give the matter that importance.

I knew that my report was accurate and I knew that he knew it was accurate. He then told me that the Yugoslav authorities wanted me to write about the reconstruction of Yugoslavia. I told him I was quite willing to do that when reconstruction was news. That ended the interview.

Two days later General Popivoda broadcast from Budapest in support of the Cominform.

No copies of official notes or announcements are made available to foreign correspondents. Even if a correspondent asks for one, he cannot get it. The notes are usually issued at night, after all the Government departments are closed. Tanjug refuses to supply a copy, even though the correspondent is a subscriber to the service.

On one occasion I heard that a note had been issued and dashed round to the Information Department to get a copy. But the building was in darkness. Everybody had gone home. The same was the case with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So I went to Tanjug, but there I was not even allowed inside the building, despite the fact that two days before I had had a long and cordial interview with the managing editor.

I had to wait on the doorstep, whilst the porter telephoned for somebody to come down. One of the editorial staff eventually came down and I told him who I was, showed him my credentials and asked if I might have a copy of the note to the Hungarian Government.

He said that was impossible, as there was only one copy and that was being broadcast and teleprinted. I asked if I could come and take notes from the copy. That was impossible, he said. We talked and argued, but he was adamant. He said that the note would be in the roneoed copy of the service issued the next day. It was not even in that.

Later, as a result of representations, the Information Department summoned a Press conference when a note was sent to the Greek Government protesting about a frontier incident.

The text of the note, which was lengthy, was read out in Yugoslav and translated, a sentence at a time, into English.

When asked by the correspondents whether the text of the note had been given to Tanjug, the Information Department spokesman, Velizar Savich, said that it had been given to Tanjug at the same time as it had been read to us.

When I got back to my hotel, only a few minutes' walk away, the telephone bell was ringing from Prague. The office wanted to know if I knew anything about a note to the Greek Government. It had been broadcast worldwide by Tanjug and picked up by monitors.

Members of the Cabinet and high Government officials make themselves inaccessible to foreign correspondents. In an attempt to bring the situation of the foreign correspondents to the attention of the Government and so devise a means of establishing a reasonable flow of news from official sources, I tried to see the then deputy Foreign Minister, Dr. Alcsch Bebler.

I was not even allowed past the first doorman. I wrote a letter, which was delivered by hand, but there was no reply.

I tried to secure an interview with Tito. The talks and negotiations with Government officials over this interview went on for months, until I was expelled.

The constant threat of expulsion hangs over the head of the correspondent who reports the news or the situation as he sees it, without any propaganda slant. '

During the Danubian Conference the correspondent of the French news agency, Agence France Presse, Vincent Lapteff, who had been living in Belgrade for three years, was expelled with his wife and child at forty-eight hours' notice. They were expected to dispose of their flat, sell their furniture and be out of the country inside forty-eight hours. The accusation was of false and tendentious reporting.

A joint protest by the correspondents at the conference and a diplomatic *démarche* by the French Ambassador secured an extension to the period of time allowed Lapteff to leave the country. But he still had to go. He had no idea what it was that the Yugoslav authorities objected to in his messages.

Later, I was expelled, making the fifth correspondent to be honoured in this way over a period of less than a year. I was given only forty-eight hours' notice, and the accusation was the standard one of 'false and tendentious reporting'.

My expulsion was completely unexpected. I was asked to go down to the Information Department and my colleague Bralovics commented cheerfully: 'I bet this is the Tito interview you've been after.' I was not so confident and replied: 'Ring up all the jails if I am not back in half an hour.'

At the Information Department I was obliged to wait and then the head of the department, Velizar Savich, rushed in through the door, quite red in the face, and asked me to step into his room. It was quite plain that there was something wrong.

Inside his room, we sat down and after an exchange of courtesies, Savich burst out: 'You have got to leave Yugoslavia in forty-eight hours.' Just like that, out of a clear blue sky. I was flabbergasted, but asked why.

'Because you wrote that Yugoslavia had adopted an anti-Soviet attitude,' he replied.

'I wrote nothing of the sort,' I retorted. 'You can see copies of all my dispatches if you wish.'

This offer he ignored.

I then asked him if it was a decision of the Cabinet. He said: 'No. The Foreign Minister and the UNO delegation in Paris complained about your dispatch, so I have been instructed to tell you to leave the country in forty-eight hours.'

There is no appeal against an expulsion order. The Yugoslav authorities have never been known to revoke one. The British Ambassador, Sir Charles Peake, was in Budapest and the American Ambassador, Mr. Cavendish Cannon, was out of town.

The Foreign Minister was in Paris, so even if either or both had been in Belgrade, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to get a subordinate official in Belgrade to overrule his superior's order from Paris.

Back in the hotel, I had been telling colleagues about it for a few minutes, when the telephone bell rang. It was Gunsberg, the correspondent of Agence France Presse, who replaced Lapteff. He asked me if it was true that I had been expelled. I asked him how he knew and he told me that Savich had phoned him up and read him a communiqué. Savich had not had the courtesy to tell me he was going to put out a communiqué about the matter, let alone tell me what was in it. Gunsberg read it out to me and I told him what had happened.

I discovered later that it was a headline put on my report by a Paris newspaper which had annoyed the Yugoslav authorities. This headline had given a pro-Cominform slant to my report on the Parliament session by saying that Yugoslavia had adopted an anti-Soviet

attitude, which I myself had not said.

Yugoslavia was still toting the Russian line in foreign policy and voting solidly with the Eastern bloc at the UNO sessions. So the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Edward Kardelj, and the UNO delegation complained to Belgrade about the report and I was duly expelled.

The Yugoslav Government merely pays lip-service to democracy. The country is called a people's democracy and therefore, for appearances' sake, it has a Parliament. But it is a Parliament of Puppets, which rubber-stamps automatically all the administration's measures.

I attended the sixth session of the Federal Assembly, as it is called. The last day's meeting was a combined one of the Federal Assembly and the House of Nations, to approve a resolution moved by Dr. Petar Stambolich.

An amusing feature of the sessions was the way in which the deputies applauded the Government as they came in and took their seats at desks raised on a dais, applause in which the Government itself joined, so that the day's business began with everybody being jolly good fellows together.

That set the note. There was no opposition. I only heard one deputy get up and protest mildly that he was not satisfied with the pig collection, but nobody took any notice of him.

There cannot very well be any opposition, because nobody outside the deputies knows what they are discussing. The newspapers do not report what Parliament will discuss. Journalists attending the sessions are not supplied with copies of the Bills or Acts being approved. Nor can they obtain copies if they ask for them. The deputies have copies, know what is being discussed by the Government Minister and vote automatically in favour. The way the hands go up in unison, as though

somebody had pulled a string behind the scenes! There are no stragglers; everybody is so keen and eager to be supporting the Government.

The enthusiasm at the last day's meeting was terrific. Applause and acclamation were switched on and off like a gramophone record. There was no dying away of the applause; it stopped short suddenly, as though at a hidden signal, and there were no isolated handclaps. It was uncanny. It was as though the whole thing had been rehearsed beforehand. Nobody voted against the Government at any stage.

Even after the session, the Acts and Bills approved were not published in the newspapers. They have to go to the Praesidium for approval. After the Praesidium has approved them, they appear in the official gazette. Then the newspapers may publish them, if anybody is interested. It is then too late to express any disapproval or opposition.

During the sixth session a law was unanimously approved providing for stiff penalties against Government employees guilty of such offences as economic espionage or sabotage of the Five Year Plan.

The Minister of Justice, Franc Frol, revealed that despite the purge of the Civil Service, the Government had no illusions that there were elements hostile to the regime still in Government service, and it was against them that the measures were directed. The penalties were not revealed, as the text of the law had not been made public and was not made public until approved by the Praesidium and published in the official gazette.

This law was approved without discussion, as was another making it possible to call on priests to reveal secrets divulged in confessional. There was no protest against this Bill.

The reader may very well ask: What does this all matter to me? It matters a great deal, for the following reasons—it shows the way in which a totalitarian Communist regime works; it means that if foreign correspondents are not allowed access to news sources, the British public cannot be well informed on foreign affairs.

If the British public is not well informed on foreign affairs, the British public cannot take an intelligent interest in foreign affairs and reach a just appreciation of events and trends which lead to war.

Furthermore, a tightly controlled Yugoslav Press means that the people of Yugoslavia are given an entirely false impression of life in the Western world and the attitude of the Western peoples, which makes them ready prey for any imaginary war scare that it occurs to the authorities to work up.

It also means that the people of Yugoslavia are unable to exercise any control over their Government, for it is not possible to control a Government whose activities are enshrouded in darkness other than propaganda statements issued from Government agencies.

A free Press is also a safety valve for the public and a useful guide to governments. Without a free Press, a Government is as ignorant of what people are thinking and doing as the people are of what the Government are doing. Except that the Government can find out to a certain extent what the people are thinking and saying through the secret police, a highly dangerous method of acquiring such information.

I believe that one of the first conditions of granting Yugoslavia any aid should be that freedom of the Press should be restored. The newspapers of Yugoslavia should be allowed to publish freely what news they are able to gather inside Yugoslavia and from abroad and

should be given freedom to comment on conditions inside Yugoslavia.

A free Press is one of the cheapest methods of avoiding war, apart from being a necessary adjunct to a freer and more spacious life.

Restoration of a free Press would mean eventually the end of totalitarianism, under which people are hauled out of bed and thrust into jail for their political opinions, without trial. At present, Tito cannot be questioned or criticised.

CHAPTER VIII

The Battle Begins

As though the food and economic situation were not sufficient for them to tackle at once, the Yugoslavs have taken on Russia and the Cominform in a major political battle on the outcome of which may very well depend the future of Communism as an international force and the existence of Yugoslavia as an independent state.

The reasons for the dispute first came out into the open during the Danube Conference, when a booklet containing an exchange of correspondence between Tito and the Bolshevik Committee in Moscow appeared unobtrusively on the bookstalls.

It is clear from an examination of this correspondence that the seeds of the dispute were sown in 1946, or two years before, when Tito asked for a reduction in the salaries paid to the Russian military advisers in Yugoslavia. When this was rejected, he asked for a reduction in the number.

From then on, Belgrade and Moscow got more and more at loggerheads, unknown to the outside world, and the dispute moved out of the purely administrative field to the political.

The exchange of correspondence throws interesting light on the attitude of the Soviet Union towards a small power. It becomes quite plain that Soviet Russia was attempting to exercise tight control over the political, economic and military administration of Yugoslavia.

The first letter published is one from Tito to Molotov. Tito wrote as Prime Minister on 20th March 1948 to the then Russian Foreign Minister V. Molotov: 'On

18th March 1948, we were informed by General Barskov to the effect that he had received a telegram from Marshal Bulganin, Minister of National Defence of U.S.S.R., in which we were notified that the Government of U.S.S.R. had decided immediately to withdraw all military advisers and instructors. The reason for this measure, it was indicated, was that "they are surrounded by absence of comradeship", i.e. that they were not being treated in a friendly spirit in Yugoslavia.

'It is obvious that the Government of the U.S.S.R. is entitled to recall its military specialists. But we have felt it extremely painful that the Government of the U.S.S.R. should have indicated these as the reasons for its decision in the matter. Consequently, we have investigated the behaviour and relationship of responsible persons in inferior positions in Yugoslavia towards the Soviet military advisers and instructors. In the course of it, we acquired a firm conviction that there are no grounds for the reasons given as necessitating their withdrawal. Furthermore, we established that during all the time of their sojourn in Yugoslavia, the behaviour of everybody towards them was not only correct, but most hospitable and brotherly.'

The letter continues: 'On 19th March 1948, Armjaninov, Chargé d'Affaires [of the Soviet Embassy], paid me a visit and informed me about the contents of a message by which the Government of U.S.S.R. orders the recall of even all their civilian specialists from Yugoslavia. The reasons which led to this decision are also incomprehensible and baffling to us.

'It is correct that Srzentic, Assistant to the Minister Kidric, had declared to the Soviet Commercial Representative Lebedev that according to an order issued by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,

officials have no right to give anybody important economic information and that Soviet officials should ask for such information from a higher source, i.e. from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and from the Government. At that time, Srzentic said to Lebedev he should ask Minister Kidric personally for information of interest to him. Long before, your man was told that official representatives of the Soviet Government may obtain all important and needed information directly from the leaders of Yugoslavia.

'This decision was taken by us because every official in our ministerial offices had been giving information, needed or not needed, to everybody. This is to say, that various people handed out official economic secrets which could come and actually did come in some cases, to the knowledge of our common enemies.

'We are not aware of any special understanding, such as is alleged in the message, according to which our officials have the right to give varied information of an economic character, without the approval of our Government or the Central Committee, to Soviet workers in the economic field except, of course, such information as they need in order to fulfil their duties.

'Every time that the Ambassador of the Government of the U.S.S.R., Comrade Lavrentiev, personally requested from me certain necessary information, I gave it to him without restriction. Other responsible and leading persons in our country have also done this. We would feel rather astonished if the Soviet Government would not agree with such procedure from the State point of view.

'At the same time, we feel compelled to refute, in the present case as well, the reasons given as meaning "unfriendly behaviour and lack of confidence" towards

the Soviet specialists and representatives in Yugoslavia. None of these officials, up to now, has put forward a complaint to us on similar lines, although each of them could have done so personally to me, since I have never refused to receive any of the Soviet officials. The same applies to all other Yugoslav responsible persons in a leading position.

‘From all this it must be deduced that the above-mentioned reasons have not led the Government of the U.S.S.R. to proceed with these steps. And it would be our desire that the Government of U.S.S.R. should frankly state what the matter really is; that they tell us what, in their view, is not in accord with friendly relations between our two countries. We consider this course of affairs as detrimental to both countries and that sooner or later all that impedes the friendly relations between our countries will have to be eliminated.’

The answer to Tito’s letter was dated 27th March and signed by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Moscow. It acknowledges receipt of two letters from Tito, one dated 18th March and the other 20th March. The correspondence as published by the Yugoslav Government does not include a letter from Tito dated 18th March.

This reply of 27th March states that the Russian military advisers were directed to Yugoslavia after insistent requests had been received from the Yugoslav Government.

It continues: ‘It should be kept in mind that the Soviet military advisers were selected for Yugoslavia in much smaller numbers than the Yugoslav Government asked for. It may be deduced from this that the Soviet Government had no intention of imposing its advisers upon Yugoslavia.’

‘Nevertheless, later on, Yugoslav military leaders amongst them being Koca Popovich, have found it possible to declare that the number of Soviet military advisers must be reduced by 60 per cent. This declaration was given with different interpretations, e.g. some stated that the Soviet military advisers are very expensive for Yugoslavia; others stated that the Yugoslav Army need not adopt the experience of the Soviet armies; yet others stated that the rules of the Soviet Army only represent a model and that it is not worth while to adopt them in the Yugoslav Army; others have made open allusions hinting at their belief that the Soviet military advisers receive their salaries for nothing, since no profit from them is to be expected.

‘In the light of these facts, it is quite understandable that Djilas should make at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia a statement that is offensive to the Soviet Army, that is: Soviet officers are morally inferior to officers of the British Army. Be it noted that this statement made by Djilas and directed against the Soviet, as is known, did not encounter any protest from other members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.’

This letter quotes the message from the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade, Lavrentijev, dated 9th March, as saying: ‘Srzentic, Assistant to Kidric in the Economic Council, stated to the Commercial Representative Lebedev that there is an order from the Government by which all officials and institutions of the State are forbidden to give anybody any economic information.

‘Therefore, without regard to a previously existing agreement, he could not give such data to Lebedev. It had been the duty of officers of State Security to effect

a control in all these matters. Srzentic also stated that Kidric intended to discuss the matter with Lebedev.'

This letter from the Bolshevik Committee in Moscow went on to allege: 'From the communication by Lavrentijev, the contrary to what you write is seen, namely that Soviet representatives in Yugoslavia are being put under the control and supervision of Yugoslav Security Officers.

'It would not be superfluous to mention that such a practice of supervision is encountered by Soviet representatives only in bourgeois countries and then not in all of them.

'It also needs noting that Yugoslav Security Officers shadow not only representatives of the Soviet Government, but also the representative of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) at the Office of the Cominform, Comrade Yudin.

'It would be ridiculous to think that the Soviet Government could agree to keep its civilian specialists in Yugoslavia under such a regime.'

This letter then went on to list a number of complaints against the Yugoslavs, stating at the same time that they had no connection with the recalling of civilian and military advisers.

It complained that leading Yugoslav Communists were circulating anti-Soviet statements and quoted some of them. They included such allegations as 'The All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) is decadent', 'In the U.S.S.R. there prevails a Great Power chauvinism', 'The U.S.S.R. tends to conquer Yugoslavia economically,' 'The Cominform is a means of conquest of other parties by the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)'.

The Bolshevik Committee continues: 'These anti-Soviet statements generally are covered up with left-wing phrases such as "Socialism in the U.S.S.R. has ceased

to be revolutionary", "Yugoslavia is alone the true flag bearer of revolutionary Socialism". It is ridiculous to listen to such stories about the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) uttered by quite dubious Marxists of the type of Djilas, Vukmanovic, Kidric, Rankovich and others.

'We recognise unconditionally the right enjoyed by every Communist Party, thus also by the Yugoslav Communist Party, to criticise the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), as well as the right of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to criticise any other Communist Party.

'But Marxism demands that any criticism be open-minded and honest and not behind the scenes and slanderous, which deprives the criticised of any possibility of answering the critics.

'The criticism voiced by the Yugoslav leadership is not public and honest, but behind the scenes and dishonest and simultaneously, it is hypocritical in character, since while they discredit the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) behind their backs, they strive officially to glorify it, like Pharisees, and praise it to the skies. This makes it a slander and an attempt to discredit the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). This is an attempt to depose the Soviet system.'

The Bolshevik Committee draws a parallel between the alleged behaviour of the Yugoslav Communists and that of Trotsky. The letter reads: 'One should not disdain to recall that Trotsky, when he intended to declare war on the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), also began by accusing the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of decadence, of limited national spirit, of Great Power chauvinism.

'Of course, he covered all this with left-wing phrases

about the world revolution. Nevertheless, as is known, Trotsky himself was a degenerate and afterwards, once he had been proved for what he was, he openly joined the camp of the sworn enemies of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Soviet Union. We imagine that the political career of Trotsky is sufficiently instructive.'

The letter alleges that the Yugoslav Communist Party, although the ruling party, has not been fully legalised and continues to function in a semi-legal state. This it backs up by the allegation that the decisions made by the organs of the party as a rule are not published in the Press, nor is information of party meetings published.

In further support of its attack on the Yugoslav Communist Party, the letter says that the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party is co-opted, not elected, that there is no or almost no criticism or self-criticism in the party and the Secretary of the Party in charge of Cadres is Minister of State Security.

It adds: 'Or in other words, the party cadres are put under the supervision of the Minister of State Security. According to the theory of Marxism, it is the duty of the party to control all state organs of the country, among them also the Ministry of State Security. But in Yugoslavia the contrary is the case, since in essence it is the Ministry of State Security that is controlling the Party.

'In the Yugoslav Communist Party there is also not noticeable any spirit of the policy of class struggle. The capitalist elements in the village and the town are growing in full swing and the leadership of the party does not take measures to scale down these capitalist elements. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia is dreaming the rotten opportunist theory which stipulates that capitalist elements will grow peacefully into Social-

ism, a theory taken from Bernstein, Folmar, Bukharin.

'According to the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the party constitutes the fundamental leading force in a country and it has its own programme and it does not dissolve itself in the masses which are outside the party. In Yugoslavia, however, the National Front is regarded as the main leading force, and indeed, efforts are directed towards dissolving the party in the National Front.

'In his speech at the Congress of the National Front of Yugoslavia, Comrade Tito has stated: "Has the Communist Party in Yugoslavia some other programme, a different one from that of the National Front? No. The Communist Party has no other programme. The programme set up by the National Front, this is the Communist programme."

'In Yugoslavia they consider this extraordinary theory of the party as being a new theory. In fact, however, there is nothing new about it. In Russia, forty years ago, a section of the Mensheviks proposed to dissolve the Marxist party into the extra-party organisation of masses of workers and that the first party be changed into the second; another section of the Mensheviks proposed that the Marxist party dissolve itself into a workers' organisation composed of workers and peasants *en masse* and outside the party organism and that the first be changed into the second. As is well known, Lenin then characterised those Mensheviks as devilish opportunists and as liquidators of the party.'

This letter also expresses astonishment that General Velebit, whom it describes as a 'British spy', should continue as the first assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It adds: 'As long as Velebit stays on the staff of the leadership of Foreign Affairs, the Soviet Government consider that this puts it in a very difficult position and

that it is deprived of a possibility of having an open correspondence with the Yugoslav Government via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia.'

These allegations were answered in a letter dated 13th April 1948, signed by Tito and Kardelj, in the name of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and addressed to Stalin and Molotov.

This letter states: 'We feel induced to suppose that the reason inspiring the Government of U.S.S.R. in withdrawing its specialists from Yugoslavia must be found in nothing else but in our decision to reduce the number of specialists to what is absolutely necessary on account of financial difficulties.

'In 1946, the President of the Federal Government, Tito, officially notified the Ambassador of the Soviet Government, Lavrentijev, to the effect that for various reasons it was wellnigh impossible for our country to pay such high salaries to the Soviet military specialists.

'He asked him to hand this declaration to the Government of the U.S.S.R. in order that, with respect to our country, conditions of payment of salaries to specialists be moderated.

'Ambassador Lavrentijev communicated the answer of the Soviet Government, stating that the salaries in question could not be reduced and that we should proceed as best we could. Tito told Lavrentijev in reply that for that reason we would feel compelled to reduce the number of specialists as soon as this were possible, without inflicting too grave damage to the efficiency of our Army.

'The salaries paid to Soviet specialists amounted to four times those paid to our Army Commanders and three times those paid to our Federal Ministers of State. An Army Commander in our Army of the rank of

Lieutenant-General or Colonel-General received a salary then of 9,000 to 11,000 dinars monthly.

'A Soviet military specialist with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, Colonel or General, was paid a salary of 30,000 to 40,000 dinars. At that time a Yugoslav Federal Minister of State received a monthly salary of 12,000 dinars.

'It is thus understandable that we felt such amounts to be a financial burden as much as a political injustice, since it was hard to explain it to our people.

'We do not exclude the possibility of some remarks made by some Yugoslavs on this matter, remarks that were out of place. In such cases we needed some well-founded information in order to enable us to proceed as certainly we would against any repetition of such incidents.

'In this connection it should be mentioned and noted that some Soviet specialists have not always behaved as they should and that this has caused discontent with some of our people, whereupon despite our desire, remarks could have been made which were distorted afterwards and in a distorted form have been communicated to the Commander of the Soviet Army.'

On the matter of the behaviour of Soviet specialists, Tito himself could personally testify. His own son was shot in the stomach by a Russian officer in a Belgrade cabaret during a quarrel over a girl.

Tito and Kardelj accuse the Soviet Intelligence Service of enlisting Yugoslav citizens inside Yugoslavia and comment: 'We are unable to give it any other interpretation than that of supposing it to be directed against our country's interests. This is being done despite the fact that our leadership and our officers of State Security have protested against this activity and have let it be

known that we are not willing to tolerate this any longer. Our officers, our leading officials and also all those who are inspired by hostile intentions towards the new Yugoslavia are being enlisted into the Soviet Intelligence Service.

'We possess evidence showing that some officials of the Soviet Intelligence Service, while enlisting our party members, besmirch our leaders with suspicions, belittle their prestige and show them as incapable of their tasks and as suspicious characters.

'For instance, Colonel Stepanov did not hesitate in 1945 to try to enlist one of our good comrades who was working in the central department of cyphers and deciphering messages in our offices of State Security.

'Colonel Stepanov, on this occasion, blackened and threw suspicion on all our leading men. He admitted, however, that "for the time being Marshal Tito is working as he should". Such cases are still to be found right up to the present. This means that such enlisting does not serve the aim of a struggle against some capitalist country.

'Thus we could not avoid coming to the conclusion that this activity serves the purpose of ruining our unity at home; that it is meant to destroy all confidence in the leadership; that it is carried out in order to demoralise the people and to compromise their respect for the State leadership and it results in producing a source of the collection of false information. This sort of activity performed by the officers of the Soviet Intelligence Service could not be regarded as loyal and friendly disposed towards our country, which is entering upon socialism and is the truest of allies to the U.S.S.R.

'We are unable to agree that the Soviet Intelligence Service should lay out its network inside Yugoslavia.

'We have organised a State Security Service and have our own intelligence service with the duty to fight against various foreign capitalist elements and the class enemy inside our country. If some Soviet Intelligence Officers require any information or assistance in this respect, they could obtain it any time they wanted and this has also been done by us up to now.'

The letter concluded by asking the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to send one or several of its members to Yugoslavia to investigate any question of detail.

This suggestion is rejected by the All-Union Committee in a letter from Moscow dated 4th May 1948. The All-Union Committee says: 'We consider this suggestion as an incorrect way of dealing with the question, since it is not a matter of verifying single facts, because transgressions of principles are involved.

'As is well known, the central committees of nine Communist parties are already acquainted with the problem of the Soviet-Yugoslav disagreement. They are in the Inform Buro. It would be incorrect to exclude the other Communist parties from this matter. Therefore, we suggest that this question be discussed at the next meeting of the Inform Buro.'

This letter of 4th May makes it clear that there is a fundamental cleavage between Yugoslavia's interpretation and application of Communism and the Russian form of Communism.

The All-Union Committee queries whether Tito and Kardelj are Marxists at all. They write: 'It is not accidental that the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party avoids the question of the class struggle and the checking of capitalist elements in the village.

'Further, the Yugoslav leaders in their statements

remain as good as silent on the question of class differentiation in the village and speak of the peasantry as a single entity and they don't mobilise the party for the purpose of overcoming the difficulties that follow from an increase in the profiteering elements in the village.

'However, the political situation in the Yugoslav village does not provide any grounds for foolhardy self-indulgence and benign kindness. Under conditions as those in Yugoslavia, where the land has not been nationalised, where private ownership of the land still exists and where the land can be bought and sold, where labour is hired and so forth, the party cannot be educated in a spirit of hushing up the class struggle and of pacifying the class contradictions without at the same time disarming it before the fundamental difficulties in building up socialism.

'This means that they put the Yugoslav Communist Party to sleep with the lullaby of the rotten opportunist theory according to which the capitalist elements peacefully grow into socialism, a theory borrowed from Bernstein, Folmar and Bukharin.

'It is also not accidental that some of the prominent leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party deviate from the Marxist-Leninist way in the question of the leading role of the working class.

'Whereas Marxism-Leninism starts from recognising the leading role of the working class in the process of eliminating capitalism and of building up of a socialist society, the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party develop utterly differing views. Sufficient is it to indicate the following statement of Comrade Tito made in Zagreb, November 1946 (in the newspaper *Borba* of 2nd November 1946):

'“We do not tell the peasants that they are the most

powerful column of our State in order to catch their votes, but because they really are that column."

"This viewpoint is in utter contradiction with Marxism-Leninism."

"According to Marxism-Leninism, it is the considered view that in Europe and therefore also in the countries of the people's democracy, the progressive class, i.e. the one that is revolutionary to the very end, is the working class and this is not the peasantry.

"As far as the peasantry are concerned, the majority, i.e. the poor and the middle-class peasants, can be or are already in alliance with the working class, but the leading role in this alliance belongs to the working class. However, the abovementioned policy of Comrade Tito not only denies the leadership role of the working class, but he proclaims the whole peasantry, i.e. also the kulaks, as the firmest foundation of the New Yugoslavia. Consequently this conception expresses views which are appropriate to middle-class politicians, but not to Marxist-Leninists."

This letter also takes the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party to task for hiding behind the National Front of Yugoslavia.

It says: "The prime sin of the Yugoslav comrades rests in their fear to bring the party into the open and to show its decisions everywhere, in front of the whole people, in order to acquaint the people with the leading force, namely the party, and with the fact that the party is leading the National Front and not vice-versa.

"According to the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the Communist Party is the highest form of organisation of the working-class people and it stands above all other organisations and among them also above the Soviet in the U.S.S.R., above the National Front in Yugoslavia.

‘The party stands above all these workers’ organisations not only because it gathers into its ranks all the very best elements of the workers, but also because it has its own separate programme, its own separate policy, which is the foundation for leading and managing all the other workers’ organisations. However, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party fears to talk of all this to the working class and to the whole Yugoslav people in an open and direct manner with full voice.

‘The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia thinks that if it does not stress this point, the other parties would not have an opportunity of showing their strength and their struggle. Comrades Tito and Kardelj evidently think that by using such a cheap trick they could invalidate the law of historic development, they could trick the class and trick history. Yet this is an illusion and a self-delusion. If antagonistic classes exist, the struggle amongst them will exist too. And if that struggle exists, it will make itself felt in the activity of various groups and parties, be it legally or illegally.

‘Lenin has said that the party is the most important weapon in the hands of the working class. The task of the leaders consists in keeping this weapon in a state of preparedness for battle. Since the Yugoslav comrades are hiding the flag of the party and are avoiding stressing the leading role of the party in front of the people, they blunt this weapon of the working class, they reduce the role of the party, they disarm the working class.

‘It is ridiculous to think that on account of a cheap trick of the Yugoslav comrades, the enemy would desist from battle. Just for that purpose, the party must be kept in readiness for the battle against the enemy and

the party should not be put to sleep, its flag not hidden and it should not be made somnolent with the tale that the enemy—if you do not give him an opportunity—will stop fighting, will stop organising his forces, be it in legal or illegal form.'

The letter adds: 'One should keep well in mind that into the National Front in Yugoslavia enter very many elements, varied as to their class origin, kulaks, businessmen, small manufacturers, the bourgeois intelligentsia as well as varied political groups, including also some bourgeois parties. The fact remains that in Yugoslavia on the political arena only, the National Front has come to the fore and that the party and its organisations do not come to the fore openly in its own name and in front of the people. This lessens the role of the party in the political life of the country.

'Comrades Tito and Kardelj have forgotten that the party is growing and it can only grow in an open battle with the enemies and that the cheap tricks and machinations of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia could never replace this battle as a schooling for the education of party cadres.

'Obstinate refusal to admit mistakes in the statement where the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had no other programme bar the one of the National Front, proves that the Yugoslav leaders have gone far astray from Marxist-Leninist views on the Party. We see in this fact the danger of developing tendencies towards liquidating the Communist Party in Yugoslavia, and this danger threatens the very existence of the Communist Party, as well as finally it contains a hidden danger of decadence for the whole Yugoslav People's Republic.'

The letter goes on to call Tito and Kardelj Trotskyists by inference. It draws a parallel between the way in

which the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia is run and the methods employed by Trotsky. It alleges that the 'members of the party are under the supervision of the Minister of State Security, Alexander Rankovich, who is also secretary to the Central Committee, and that members are afraid to voice their opinions and 'prefer to keep silent so as not to expose themselves to repressive measures'.

It goes on: 'It sufficed, for instance, that Comrade Zujovich at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia expressed his disagreement with the projected reply of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to the letter of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for him to be excluded immediately from the Central Committee.'

Sreten Zujovich, together with Andrija Hebrang, was expelled from the Yugoslav Communist Party for anti-party activities and both are now in jail. The principal accusation against them is that they tried to sabotage the Five Year Plan. Both are suspected of having passed on information to the Russians which was not to the liking of Tito.

The commission which investigated the activities of Zujovich* and Hebrang recommended expulsion of Zujovich as 'an indurate fractionalist, an anti-party element, a slanderer and an enemy of our party and our country'.

Hebrang was expelled as 'an anti-party and harmful element, a traitor and a tool of the class enemy'.

The letter continues: 'It is thus obvious that the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia looks upon the party not as upon an independent organism, having its right to state its opinion, but

as upon a partisan detachment whose members have no right to discuss any question whatsoever, but who have the duty to execute all desires of the "Upper Command" without uttering a word. This is called in our country fostering military methods in the party and it is utterly at disaccordance with the principles of inner party democracy in the Marxist party.

'As is well known, Trotsky had in his time also attempted to introduce into the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) this military method of managing affairs, but the party, under the leadership of Lenin, broke him down and condemned him, and these military methods have been discarded and the inner party democracy re-established as a very important principle of party structure.'

The Bolshevik Committee comes out on the side of Zujovich and Hebrang in a section of the letter which is headed 'Regarding the Conceit of the Leadership in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and of Their Incorrect Behaviour Towards Their Own Mistakes'.

The Bolshevik Committee says: 'It is evident from the letters of Comrades Tito and Kardelj that they utterly deny the very existence of any errors whatever in the activity of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and they deny that there existed slanderous propaganda circulating in the narrow circles of the party cadres of Yugoslavia with regard to the "decadence of the U.S.S.R." declining into an imperialist State and so forth.

'They consider it a matter of incorrect information received by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) concerning the state of affairs in Yugoslavia. They suppose that the Central

Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) had fallen a "victim" to incorrect and slanderous information that had been spread by Comrades Zujovich and Hebrang.

'They suppose that had that incorrect information on the state of affairs in Yugoslavia not been spread, no disagreement between the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia would have occurred. In this manner they arrive at the conclusion that the mistakes committed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia are not involved at all.

'They suppose that the matter is not concerned with the criticism of these mistakes voiced by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), but with the incorrect information spread by Comrades Zujovich and Hebrang, who had "supposedly tricked" the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) into believing these reports. Thus they believe that everything will be all right if they punish Comrades Zujovich and Hebrang.'

The letter continues: 'In order to detect the errors of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, it is not at all necessary to reach for reports of individual comrades such as, for instance, of Comrades Zujovich and Hebrang. For it abundantly suffices to study the official statements made by leaders of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, for instance, of Comrades Tito, Djilas, Kardelj and of others published in the Press.

'We declare herewith that the Soviet people have never received any reports from Comrade Hebrang. We declare herewith that the conversation Comrade Zujovich had with the Soviet Ambassador in Yugoslavia, Comrade Lavrentijev, did not give a tenth part of what is con-

tained in the erroneous and anti-Soviet speeches of Yugoslavia's leaders.

'Repressive measures taken against these comrades are not only a form of revenge that is not permissible and as such incompatible with the principles of inner party democracy, but they bear witness also to the anti-Soviet position that Yugoslav leaders adopt, as they look upon a talk by a Yugoslav Communist with the Soviet Ambassador as if it were a crime.'

This letter makes it quite plain that the Russians want to put Yugoslavia on the same plane as the satellite countries.

It says: 'Nobody could deny the merits and successes of the Yugoslav Communist Party. This is not contested. But it should be pointed out that the merits and successes, for example, of the Communist Parties of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania are not in any way less than the merits and successes of the Yugoslav Communist Party.'

'Nevertheless, the leadership of these Communist Parties behave modestly and do not shout about their successes, thus differing from the Yugoslav leaders, who have pierced the ears of all with their exaggerated self-glorifications.

'It should be noticed as well that the French and Italian Communist Parties in matters of revolution have not less, but greater merits than the Yugoslav Communist Party.'

The reply signed by Tito and Kardelj to this long letter said that it 'convinces us of the futility of any of our explanations, even with facts that all accusations directed against us are the results of false information.

'We do not try to avoid criticism on any question of principle. But we feel in this case that we are deprived

of a right to equality and therefore we are not able to accede to the suggestion that this matter be decided by the Cominform Buro.

'Nine parties have received your first letter and we had not been informed of this before. These nine parties have taken a stand in resolutions. The contents of your letter have not remained an internal affair for each party. It has been made known to circles outside the permissible ones and consequently, in some countries, as, for instance, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, our party, as well as the country as a whole, have been insulted as was the case with our parliamentary delegation to Prague.'

CHAPTER IX

Tito Defies The Cominform

YUGOSLAVIA refused to send a delegate to the meeting of the Cominform which was to discuss Yugoslavia's behaviour and the meeting was held without a delegate from Yugoslavia. The meeting decided to expel Yugoslavia from the Cominform. That was on 29th June

The issue was decided before the actual meeting, as a statement by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia of 20th June, sent to the meeting of the Cominform, stated: 'The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia recalls that it proposed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) that it sends its representatives to Yugoslavia for a joint investigation of disputed questions on the spot.

'The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) did not accept this procedure, which in our opinion represents the only correct one, but, even before receiving our answer, brought up the disagreements before the other parties of the Inform Buro, that is, it sent them the text of the letter at the same time as it was sent to us, at which time the leaders of all the parties, except the French and Italian, sent us written statements informing us of their judgment of our party.'

In other words, Tito refused to accept the discipline of the Cominform, which, contrary to what the Russians stated at the time of its formation, is not just a clearing-house for information between the various Communist Parties. The Cominform has replaced the Comintern,

dissolved at the request of the Allies, and is the chosen instrument of the Kremlin for the maintenance of order and discipline among the satellites.

Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party consider themselves in a very different position from the leaders in the Cominform countries. Tito and his Cabinet spent the war inside Yugoslavia, fighting the Germans, the Italians, the Hungarians and the Bulgars, as well as General Mihailovich's chetniks.

To quote Tito's own words: 'I did not liberate Yugoslavia by returning in an aeroplane, smoking a pipe.' He feels, and his fellow Yugoslavs feel, that they are entitled to different treatment from the satellites, on the score of their record during the war. They are not Kremlin puppets placed in power by the Red Army.

Tito has no intention of allowing Yugoslavia to be forced into a subordinate position as a minor satellite, supplying food and raw materials for any master-plan that the Russians have devised for Eastern Europe.

Tito is the arch-priest of National Communism. He believes that Yugoslavia should develop Communism on her own lines, according to her own peculiar geographical, historical and economic needs and in conformity with her national characteristics and customs, rather than at the pace and in the manner desired by the Kremlin.

This attitude is based on recognition of one all-important fact, that Yugoslavia is a predominantly agricultural country. The population is 80 per cent peasant, and Tito realises that, even with the complete and unchallenged totalitarian powers that he wields, he cannot carry out an industrial revolution and feed the population if 80 per cent of the people are opposed to him.

Therefore, Yugoslavia's Five Year Plan, although it proposes to change Yugoslavia's economy from being 45 per cent industrial to 64 per cent, does not give the industrial worker precedence over the agricultural.

Tito also disagrees with Stalin on the merging of the economies of the Communist countries. He has not cast Yugoslavia for a junior role in a Russian-organised Europe, supplying raw materials to the more advanced and highly industrialised satellites.

CHAPTER X

From Words to Deeds

THE Cominform did not waste any time in passing from words to action. Expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform was merely the first step in the campaign of correction.

The next step was the unleashing of a cold radio war from the Cominform capitals of Bucharest, Sofia, Budapest, Prague, Warsaw and Tirana. A ceaseless flow of abusive propaganda streamed through the ether, aimed at bringing about a split between Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party and the downfall of Tito. The newspapers of the Cominform countries also opened a propaganda barrage against Yugoslavia.

The campaign increased in violence, and thousands of Yugoslav youths were compelled to return home from Czechoslovakia, where they had gone to be trained as skilled workers. Yugoslavs in Cominform countries were insulted, their clubs raided and seized and Yugoslav nationals were arrested.

Then an economic blockade of Yugoslavia was declared by the Cominform. The first country to take action was Albania, who denounced all her economic treaties with Yugoslavia and expelled all Yugoslav economic experts in the country under the 1946 agreement. Rumania followed. This was a great blow to Yugoslavia's economy, as 80 per cent of her petroleum came from these two countries. The first effect of the blockade was to send up the price from the controlled price of 34 dinars a litre to 200 dinars. As petroleum supplies 90 per cent of the lighting in Yugoslavia, many villagers went without light.

The record harvest of 1948 was held up through shortage of fuel for the little machinery that was available. The blockade cut off, in addition to Albanian and Rumanian, oil, motor-cars, radio sets, plumbing equipment and other manufactured goods from Czechoslovakia.

The housing programme in Yugoslavia was particularly hit by the blockade, as Yugoslavia is dependent on the Cominform countries, principally Czechoslovakia, for such things as taps, water pipes, lavatories and baths, so many blocks of flats and many houses and buildings cannot be completed because there is no plumbing. Yugoslavia's telephone equipment came from Hungary before the blockade.

Russia later joined in the blockade and refused arms and war material.

The effect of the Russian and Cominform blockade is admitted by Tito. In a speech to the Federal Assembly on 27th December 1948, he said: 'The Five Year Plan provided for construction of heavy industry with the aid of our allies, namely, that we would obtain machinery from them for our heavy industry on the grounds of agreements covering capital construction goods which we had concluded with them. But this source has now vanished, owing to non-fulfilment of these agreements, and we must vigorously and without hesitation bend our efforts to fulfilling these huge tasks. In 1948 our industry had weighty tasks as regards production of various kinds of machines and machine parts for our heavy industry, including mining.

'According to the results achieved so far, it appears that we will be able to produce many items ourselves. That is why we have put the emphasis on our heavy industry in the coming year. Heavy industry needs a

large technical force, engineers, technicians, etc. We shall take the technical forces from those places that can somehow do without them and put them into heavy industry.

'In the coming year, heavy industry will need many workers and we shall see that it gets them, because fulfilment of the Five Year Plan depends on increased labour force.

'Our heavy industry also has the tremendous task of beginning the production of agricultural machinery which is imperatively necessary for the advancement of our agriculture.

'The second most important task facing us in the coming year is the mechanisation of our mining industry and the introduction of higher efficiency methods.

'Our mining industry is of tremendous importance for the fulfilment of our Five Year Plan and the construction of socialism in our country. It must cover not only our own needs, which are growing more rapidly each day, but it also represents the basic source of goods for export and for the purchase of various machines.

'We have decided not to export foodstuffs any more in 1949, such as wheat, meat, fats and the like, because we need them badly ourselves, hence it is the mining industry that will have to bear the main burden.

'Our miners will have to give us more coal, lead, copper, mercury, antimony, manganese ore and many other things, so that we can purchase various machines and consumers' goods from abroad without selling foodstuffs.'

The attitude of the average Yugoslav to the blockade is reflected in an experience I had when I went to the Communications building to arrange collect facilities so that I could telegraph the Prague office of the United

Press without paying spot cash each time.

The official was quite willing and anxious for me to have collect facilities with London. That, he arranged in no time. But for Prague, no. If I wanted collect facilities with Prague, I had to get the people in Prague to fix it up. Presentation of a letter from the Prague office was not sufficient. I never did get my collect facilities with Prague.

An attempt was made to found an anti-Tito movement in Rumania, whither the headquarters of the Cominform were moved from Belgrade after Yugoslavia's expulsion. But the man who was to have headed the anti-Tito forces, Colonel-General Arso Yovanovich, was shot dead at midnight on the night of 11th August to 12th, while crossing the frontier from Yugoslavia into Rumania.

According to a Ministry of Defence colleague, Arso Yovanovich was disappointed at not having been made commander-in-chief of the Yugoslav armed forces. Being an ambitious man, intelligent and able, he was credited with the intention of becoming commander-in-chief of the anti-Tito forces which were to be organised in Rumania. He was a cousin of Blazo Yovanovich, the very pro-Tito premier of Montenegro.

Major-General Branko Petrichevich, a political commissar in the Yugoslav army, was captured at the same time and Colonel Vlado Dapchevich got across the frontier.

According to the Yugoslav Ministry of Interior, which announced the shooting, the three officers arrived at the Government-controlled estate 'Sotchica', near Vrshac, on the pretext that they wanted to go boar-hunting. With the director-general of the estate, Svetolic Arabjac, who apparently knew nothing of their intention to flee

to Rumania, they set out for the frontier, to check the frontier security before going on the hunt.

A frontier guard saw them and went to inform his commandant. The Yugoslav Ministry of Interior statement said that one of the fugitives took out his pistol and fired at the frontier guard, who, in self-defence, fired at them with his rifle, killing two. The other killed was Arabjac.

The other two ran for the frontier, but Major-General Branko Petricevich was captured.

The Yugoslav Communist Party made a great fuss about this affair and the organ of the party, *Borba*, compared it with the Tukachevsky case in Russia.

The newspaper wrote: 'The unity of our party, the unity of our working masses, gathered around the people's front, our own unity of fighters and the commanding cadres of our glorious army will not be shattered by this great case of treason, which can be compared with the treacherous case of Tukachevsky. On the contrary, it will strengthen our unity and increase the faith in our central committee, intensifying at the same time the unmerciful and consequent purge of our ranks of similar enemy elements.'

Major-General Krsta Popivoda, Deputy Chief of the Yugoslav Air Force, who was often seen in Tito's company, fled from Yugoslavia by plane and a few days later broadcast from Bucharest in support of the Cominform.

Radonja Golubovich, who was Yugoslav Ambassador in Bucharest, was recalled on account of his alleged pro-Cominform attitude, but he refused to return to Yugoslavia. He was deprived of his nationality by Ministry of Interior decree.

A week before the Yovanovich shooting four members of the Montenegrin Government were removed from

office on the grounds that they had adopted a pro-Cominform attitude. The most prominent among them was Bozo Yumovich, former Yugoslav Ambassador to Rumania and vice-premier in the Montenegrin Government.

The people of Montenegro have the reputation of being very pro-Russian and have for years talked of themselves as 'we and 180 million Russians'.

Gradually it became clear that there was quite a body of feeling in favour of the Cominform in its dispute with Tito.

Arrests went on quietly and included Labud Kussovac, a Montenegrin, aged about 50 and former Yugoslav Press officer to UNO, who on return to Yugoslavia from U.S.A. became foreign editor of Tanjug, the official Yugoslav News Agency. He was a department chief in the Yugoslav Foreign Office and a prewar member of the Communist Party. He was very popular and was arrested while on holiday on the North Adriatic coast.

Another of those arrested was Blazo Rajchevich, a Montenegrin, a doctor of law and prewar member of the Communist Party, and director-general of the State Silo Monopoly. He was arrested in Belgrade.

The purge of pro-Cominform elements was under way for about ten days before anything leaked out. Although no official figures were obtainable, the numbers arrested ran into hundreds and included members of the secret police, whose total strength throughout the country totalled about 5,000.

In June 1949 the purge was still going on.

So Tito had a two-front cold war on his hands, one against the Cominform and one against those inside Yugoslavia who sympathised with the Cominform.

Meanwhile, the cold war between Yugoslavia and the

Cominform had its repercussions in the mountainous republic of Albania, where the Premier, Colonel-General Enver Hodja, started a widespread purge of Albanian Communists sympathetic towards Yugoslavia.'

Over 3,000 arrests were made, of whom 2,000 were arrested before Albania broke off economic relations with Yugoslavia at the beginning of July.

Those arrested included several close friends of Hodja's, many of them with first-class war records. Among them was Huri Huta, a prominent Albanian journalist, secretary of the Yugoslav-Albanian Society for Cultural Collaboration, who headed the Albanian delegation to the UNO conference at Geneva on freedom of information. He went on hunger strike as a protest against his arrest.

Those purged at first were mainly Albanian officials whose jobs brought them into regular contact with Yugoslavs when relations between the two countries were normal and friendly. As a result of the arrests, there was an exodus of Albanians across the frontier into Yugoslavia to escape the terror.

Arrests were followed by executions of sympathisers with Tito before firing squads. In Ljesh, near the Adriatic port of San Giovanni di Medua, six people were shot because they openly declared themselves against the campaign of the Cominform.

Those executed included Mark Frankova, Shokal Barjam, of Kopilik, a member of the Albanian Communist Party, whose son was killed as a National Hero in the Liberation War, Nikol Zef Djerdja and the commandant of the Vrmosh militia. The commandant went to his death before the firing squad cheering Yugoslavia and Tito.

The Albanian authorities arrested 105 people in the

Vrmosh district because their relatives had fled across the frontier into Yugoslavia. In Dukadjin, the authorities arrested the secretary and chairman of the local council for their open opposition to the Cominform resolution.

The Albanian dictator Enver Hodja sent agents-provocateurs across the frontier into Yugoslavia to stir up trouble among the minorities, particularly the Albanian minorities in the autonomous province of Kossovo and Metohija.

One refugee, secretary of a Communist party in a large district in Albania, said that he was asked to form part of a group of six, whose mission was to start agitation among the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia for the incorporation into Albania of those Yugoslav provinces inhabited by Albanians. He said that he refused, but as a result of his refusal his life was in danger, so he fled across the frontier into Yugoslavia.

The purge spread. A member of the Albanian Legation staff in Belgrade was recalled to Tirana, but refused to return.

The extent of the revolt was revealed by the execution in 1949 of the Albanian deputy Premier, Koce Xoxe, who disagreed with Enver Hodja's subservience to Moscow.

CHAPTER XI

Tito Challenges Stalin

DURING the dispute, Tito protested his loyalty to the Soviet Union and all references to the Soviet Union in the Yugoslav newspapers were in the friendliest vein. For three months this attitude was maintained, that is, until 8th September, when Russia intervened on the side of the Cominform. On that date, *Pravda* came out with a leader attacking Tito and what it described as 'the Tito Group'.

No reply appeared in the Yugoslav newspapers and it was not until 30th September that a reply was made, but this time in Parliament. Apparently the Tito Government took Russia's entry into the battle as serious and wanted some support.

On the last day of the sixth session of Parliament, Dr. Petar Stambolich, Premier of Serbia and newly appointed member of the Praesidium, presented to a joint session of Parliament and the House of Nations, a resolution signed by himself and fifty-nine other deputies, condemning the campaign by the Soviet Union and the Cominform against Yugoslavia and expressing the support of Yugoslavia for Tito in his policy.

He made a speech and read the resolution, which Dr. Blagoje Neshkovich said had the approval of the Government. Dr. Neshkovich was speaking in his capacity as Vice-Premier.

Dr. Stambolich referred to the part played by Soviet Russia in the propaganda campaign against Yugoslavia in the following terms: 'In view of Yugoslavia's correctness towards the Cominform countries and Soviet Russia, Yugoslavia is surprised at the campaign which has been

conducted by neighbouring states and even by Soviet Russia for the last three months.

'This House cannot remain unconcerned at the attacks and attackers. The attack is directed against the whole country, because it is impossible to divide our political leaders from our State policy, which conducts both our foreign and interior policy in the way most useful for the interests of the country and the people. Because of this, we submit this resolution condemning the campaign.

'The resolution expresses full confidence in and devotion to the Government in the policy it has followed up to now. The Parliament of Yugoslavia rejects as impossible the separation of the party leadership from the Government and considers the attacks on the Communist Party as attacks on the Government and its foreign policy.

'The Parliament of Yugoslavia rejects too the attack on four members of the Government, Tito, Rankovich, Djilas and Kardelj, because the Government is united just the same as the Communist Party is united. The Parliament of Yugoslavia expresses its protest and dissatisfaction at this campaign against Yugoslavia, which is for the benefit only of the enemies of Yugoslavia.'

Dr. Stambolich pointed out that in friendly countries, the right of exile was given to the enemies of Yugoslavia, 'who are offered full possibilities to organise and conduct the campaign against their own country with the occasional assistance of officials of those countries'.

He said that Albania had insulted not only Yugoslav citizens, but Yugoslav officials and the Yugoslav flag. 'In Albania and Hungary, responsible officials went so far as to call on our people to rebel against their legal Government,' he said. 'Czechoslovak officials, in an

inexplicable way, attacked our soldiers, our students and our youth.'

Both the speech and the reading of the resolution were punctuated with prolonged and enthusiastic applause and its conclusion greeted with even more enthusiastic applause and chants of 'Tito, Tito,' accompanied by rhythmic handclapping. There was no need to take a vote. The resolution was carried by acclaim. Tito had demonstrated to Russia, represented by the Tass correspondent, that he had Parliament behind him. A rubber-stamp Parliament, but there was no questioning the enthusiasm of the deputies. I don't know what would have happened to any showing reluctant support, let alone open opposition.

The most significant passage was the defiant reference to independence—"The attack is directed against the whole country because it is impossible to divide our political leaders from our State policy, which conducts both our foreign and internal policy in the way most useful for the interests of the country and the people.'

Approval of the resolution was followed by publication in *Borba* of three long articles, counterattacking Russia and the Cominform for the campaign waged against Yugoslavia. Each article occupied at least seven columns.

They were not signed, but were believed to come from the pen of Milovan Djilas, publicist and member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

The first one accused Russia and the Cominform of attempting to make Yugoslavia put the clock back. The writer said: 'An attempt is being made to compel Yugoslavia to use methods which are not suitable to her local conditions, which are old-fashioned for her and which

would drag her back rather than help her to progress forward.'

A revealing sentence in the first article showed that Yugoslavia considers herself in a special category compared with the Cominform countries. The writer accused Russia of failing to understand what is going on in Yugoslavia and added 'This failure to understand is reflected in the Soviet Press, which has systematically depreciated the value of the struggle in Yugoslavia, systematically wrongly interpreted our development and identified it with the struggle and development of countries in which there was neither revolution nor a Communist Party, as in Yugoslavia.'

The article also referred to the merging of Socialist economies, which is believed to be the Russian master-plan for the control of the satellite states. It said: 'It is very probable that the critics purposely accuse the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia of turning towards nationalism, towards the restoration of capitalism in Yugoslavia, because they are really thinking of other things which they will not say openly.'

'We can only guess what they can be. Perhaps they call it nationalism for Yugoslavia to go courageously ahead in building Socialism, keeping strictly to the laws of Marxism-Leninism and using the methods of the same doctrine, without waiting for the moment when the Socialistic economies will be merged.'

'If they disagree with this, then they should say so openly and sit down as Communists and discuss how and in what way it is possible to contribute to the common struggle for the victory of Socialism in the countries of the peoples' democracies.'

The article went on to attack the Cominform countries

for not organising their Communist parties on true Bolshevik lines and quoted as a weakness those countries which had free enlistment into the party. It pointed out that many supporters of the Hungarian Fascist Movement, the Crossed Arrows, became members of the Hungarian Communist Party.

The second article of the series accused the Soviet Union and the Cominform of tempting the 'Imperialists' to attack Yugoslavia. This was the first time that the word war or the possibility of war had been mentioned in the Yugoslav Press.

It alleged that such a shortsighted policy as the anti-Yugoslav propaganda campaign 'could one day tempt the imperialists to start an aggression against Yugoslavia.

'Such a possibility is not excluded in the future, if our critics continue on the way they have chosen. But that would mean war and a great and serious war, because, although Yugoslavia is a small country, inside it is tremendously solid. When a war starts, it would not know any frontiers. In that event, Yugoslavia could not be isolated, because such an attack by the "imperialists" would endanger a considerable part of the rest of the democratic world.'

The writer accused the Soviet Union and the Cominform of trying to isolate Yugoslavia and quoted three examples of the steps taken -- first the breaking off of all sports relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union and Cominform countries; secondly the breaking off of nearly all cultural ties, and thirdly the severing of all ties between Yugoslav youth and the youth of the Soviet Union and the Cominform countries.

The third and last article of the series demonstrated in no uncertain fashion that the Yugoslav Communist

Party is not afraid of Joe Stalin, the Russians or the Cominform. The essence of this article was that Joe Stalin may be the greatest living figure in the working-class world, but he is wrong in the dispute with Yugoslavia.

The article read: 'We have written nothing about Stalin in our Press up to now, not because we had any illusions about his attitude in this dispute, but because we considered it would be very bad form on our part to use his name to a greater extent than he had done himself.

'Stalin is considered the greatest living authority, not only in the international working movement, but also in the whole democratic world, but the right in the dispute between the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Central Committee of Bolsheviks is not on his side, but on the side of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

'We declare without any hesitation that Stalin, except in the U.S.S.R., is nowhere so loved and respected as in Yugoslavia. The line of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the struggle for Socialism and friendship with the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and the peoples of other democratic countries, is so evident and clear to the members and to all working people in our country, that they all as one have stood up to defend their party against unjust and incorrect accusations, conscious that truth is above all and convinced that it must be victorious.

'Stalin has been, is now and will be considered in our party as one of the greatest protagonists of Marxism and as the faithful pupil and successor to Lenin.

'Our Central Committee and our party are conducting the discussion with respect for principles. The attempt to divide the party leaders from the people

and from the party will fail in just the same way as other similar attempts have failed.

'These incorrect accusations conceal the fact that the dispute with "Tito's Group" in reality is a dispute with the whole Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the working masses of Yugoslavia.

'Our critics cannot understand what is quite clear to every party member and to an even greater number of citizens, that the fate of Yugoslavia and her peoples and the working class are indissolubly linked with the U.S.S.R., but that these links cannot be weakened if Yugoslavia develops to the maximum her forces in the struggle for Socialism, if she follows her own way—for her quicker and easier—on the path to Socialism.

'Have we not taken over power and expropriated the town bourgeoisie in our own peculiar way? Why cannot we go towards Socialism in our way? Because they do not understand, our critics think or pretend to think that in Yugoslavia there are nationalistic leaders in power ("Tito's Group"), who do not love the U.S.S.R. and who are capable of turning their backs on the U.S.S.R.'

'Our critics fail to understand that there is no difference between love and devotion to the U.S.S.R. and love and devotion to the fatherland, if that country is really advancing along the road to Socialism.'

Here the quarrel reached a pitch which made it impossible for Tito to be readmitted into the fold of Stalin-Communism. He has questioned the infallibility of the All-Highest in the Kremlin. It is as though one of the cardinals were to challenge the Pope on the subject of doctrine. In this dispute, though, Stalin wields certain temporal powers which are ruthless and efficient.

From this point onwards, Tito has prosecuted his

counter-campaign with vigour and in speeches and articles in the Yugoslav newspapers he has expounded his own form of Communism.

He referred to the merging of Socialist economies when he was made an honorary member of the Slovene Academy of Arts in November 1948. He said: 'The uniting of Socialist countries is a complicated matter. It is not only a question of leaders, whether they are for or against it. It is a much longer process. It must mature in the minds at least of the majority of working people to such a degree that they will realise the need and benefits both from their national and international viewpoints.

'Up to the time of such a unification, a special role is played in this by economic relations, that is, on what kind of basis they are founded and how they develop. Economic relations among Socialist countries are today still founded on the basis of capitalist exchange of goods. Nothing has yet changed here.

'Naturally, such relations are not a stimulant for an ever closer rapprochement of Socialist countries. That is, up to a certain point, understandable, if we bear in mind that most of the countries referred to here were greatly damaged in war and are trying to emerge from this destruction as quickly as possible.

'All this is understandable; but one thing is not clear and that is that in the question of exchange of goods, that is, trade, the people's democracies are taking a tougher stand towards Yugoslavia than towards some capitalist countries.'

On the question of nationalism, Tito said in this same speech: 'Whether we are nationalists or not I can say we are just as nationalistic as is necessary in order to develop among our people a sound Socialist patriotism, and

Socialist patriotism is in its essence nationalism. Socialism does not ask us to repudiate love for our Socialist homeland, to repudiate love of our peoples.

‘Socialism does not ask us to relax our efforts for the early construction of our Socialist land so as in that way to create as soon as possible better living conditions for our working people.’

Yugoslavia’s attitude towards Russia, the Cominform and Marxist-Leninism was again clearly defined by Tito in a speech to the Federal Assembly on 27th December 1948.

He said: ‘It becomes clear, then how we have sinned. The thing is that we want to build Socialism as soon as possible and that we are actually building it. The whole thing is that we are industrialising the country and giving it electricity; we are not remaining a backward agricultural country which only delivers its raw materials to other countries which then ship us the finished goods.

‘The thing is that our country should not continue to remain a source of raw materials for those countries which already possess an advanced industry. It cannot keep on buying industrial products from them at high prices, which is being done today and which was done in the past, while our peoples continue to remain poor and backward, with a low standard of living and culture, having to put up with hardships and misery as best they can and then being called the backward and uncivilised Balkans.

‘No, so long as there is a capitalist mode of trade, namely of exchange, among Socialist countries, with each one trying to sell at the highest possible price and to buy as cheaply as possible, no one has the right to ask others not to do everything to exploit their own possibilities to the maximum and to improve the standard of

living in backward countries such as ours was, for example, despite its great wealth of ores and other raw materials.

'We were not in the least surprised when Western reaction attacked us for our Five Year Plan, saying it was ambitious and not feasible. But we were astonished when our friends in the East, when certain leading men in the countries of people's democracy, started to reproach us for the same thing. As soon as we had adopted our Five Year Plan, certain responsible men in those countries began making statements which amazed us no end. It logically transpires from their statements that all we should do is continue to sow our fields—and moreover in a most primitive way—and supply raw materials to the industries of those friendly countries which have an advanced industry.

'Certain of those supposedly Marxist wisecracks go so far as to back their perverted views with quotations from Marxism-Leninism, although it is precisely on the grounds of such theory of Marxism-Leninism that such views are wrong. According to this theory, industries should be built up where there are raw materials. If we had planned to build up heavy industry in our country without the necessary pre-conditions—possessing no iron ore and having to import it, to ask for it from the countries of people's democracy, where such heavy industry already existed, then that would have been wrong and those countries would have been entitled to reject our demands, provided that their capacity was sufficient to cover the needs of our country too.

'But we have so much iron ore in our country that we can build up a strong heavy industry of our own and still have a surplus of ore left to give to other countries, first of all, of course, to the countries of people's democracy,

in exchange for those products which we need.

'If we were, for example, to build our own coke ovens without having the raw materials needed for the production of coke, without having enough coal for this purpose, then we could rightly be reproached for so doing, then we could be refused the delivery of coal for coking. But we have coal for coking and we can and must use our own coal to this end. Else we would not be able to further our heavy industry, we would need huge material and transport means if we had to import all the coke we needed for our new heavy industry. It is the same with our copper. Why should we not process our copper in our country and export the finished goods? The same holds good for our bauxite, of which there are large quantities in our country. Why should we not process our bauxite here and cover all our requirements, exporting the surplus to those countries which need it? This also applies to the other ores in the country, to antimony and non-ferrous metals which we possess in sufficient quantities not only to cover our own needs, but also to give our friends if they need them and if they help us to mechanise and modernise our mines and build up our heavy industry as soon as possible.

'But if our allies from the countries of the people's democracy refuse to help us in this respect, if they violate agreements and commitments, then we shall, of course, have to sell our raw materials elsewhere, even to capitalist countries, in order to be able to buy the machines which we need for the mechanisation of our mines, for our heavy industry, etc.'

In the same speech, Tito gave some figures of Yugoslavia's mineral exports.

'I shall give some particulars of the types and quantities of raw materials we export to the U.S.S.R. and the

countries of people's democracy. Taking into consideration the last ten months, things stand as follows: 72 per cent of all our blister copper exported went to the U.S.S.R. and countries of people's democracy, mercury 72 per cent, iron ore 100 per cent, pyrites ore 96.1 per cent, lead concentrate 85.2 per cent, zinc concentrate 57.1 per cent, lead 59.5 per cent, raw zinc 97.3 per cent, antimony 62.7 per cent, ferrochrome 62.1 per cent, hemp 93.9 per cent, caustic soda 73.1 per cent, sal ammoniac 91.9 per cent, tannin 86.2 per cent.

'From our entire export totals, we sent Czechoslovakia the following quantities, thereby covering all her needs in 1947—copper 15 per cent, lead 43.7 per cent, zinc 35.4 per cent, mercury 49 per cent, pyrites 49.7 per cent, chrome ores 97.4 per cent, corn 26 per cent.

'The above figures and the quality of the materials illustrate that the trade with the U.S.S.R. and the countries of people's democracy was at the very least, just as beneficial to them as it was to Yugoslavia.'

In his next speech, at the second congress of the Communist Party of Serbia on 21st January 1949, Tito made it quite plain to the Cominform and Russia that he had no intention of giving up the leadership in Yugoslavia.

He said: 'There is no question of, say, Tito, Rankovich, Djilas, Kardelj or any other of us simply disappearing from leading positions.'

He maintained that in the dispute between Yugoslavia and Russia and the Cominform, there was no question of Yugoslavia admitting any errors, but of 'something very different, which made it impossible for us to go to Bucharest and that we were quite right in not going.

'This something different is, first, the question of relations between Socialist states at a given stage of develop-

ment; secondly, the question of economic relations; thirdly, the question of how and when a federation—say, between ourselves and the Bulgars, might be concluded; fourthly, the question of misunderstandings concerning the nature of our economic and other relations with Albania, and fifthly, a wrong attitude towards, or rather a wrong treatment of, this country, which sacrificed so many and so much in the war, meriting better treatment.

‘There you have a number of questions which may be summed up as one general question, which is at the present stage of development, how, in what way, are Socialist states to regulate their mutual relations, so that those relations should serve as a fundamental stimulus to the further development of Socialism throughout the world, so that Socialism, as a new form of society, should be greatly desirable in the eyes of all progressive peoples throughout the world and not merely of the working class, which is the foundation of that new and more just system of society?’

‘For that reason, it is indispensable and necessary that the leading men of the Socialist states should rid themselves of those negative concepts of the mutual relations of the Socialist countries, which have been applicable in the capitalist world but may not be used in the relations between Socialist countries, for that might very well not merely hinder the victorious advance of Socialism throughout the world, but make it much more difficult to realise.

‘It is particularly important that Socialist countries should respect the principle of the equality of small and large countries, of small and large peoples. Any infringement of that Marxist principle does great harm to all progressive forces throughout the world, fighting as they are against the imperial enslavement of colonial peoples,

fighting as they are against any threat levelled by any imperialist state to the independence of small nations.

'You see, Comrades, it is this and other principles of Marxism-Leninism that we defend and for that reason our struggle transcends our national frontiers. Defending our attitude, we defend the interests of this country, which is establishing Socialism; while defending the interests of this country as such, a country establishing Socialism, we are defending Marxism-Leninism against a revisionism which is beginning to creep into everyday practice and into this unprincipled attack made on us by part of the leadership of certain Communist parties.

'All those hostile attacks are today dissembled under the fine phrase of "reinforcing" the international working-class movement and so forth. They fail to see that thereby they are effecting counter-revolutionary acts, for they are attacking a small Socialist country which has served—and still does serve—as a model to many nations. The most interesting thing is that our critics are now applying many things at home, precisely those things for which they attacked us—for example, take the question of tied prices in Hungary and Albania, the dual prices now being introduced into Czechoslovakia, the question of collectivisation and the struggle against the kulak, the question of the Popular Front and so forth.

'In order to show that they have no desire to go our way, in some of the countries of people's democracy, a beginning has been made with dissolution of the Popular Front, though at the same time they are now busy dragging it back again into their house through the back door.

'What is more, speaking at the Congress of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, Comrade Dimitrov

offered what he claimed were certain formulations concerning the nature of the regime in the people's democracies, though it could all be found in our writings in this country, both before and during our Congress, which was held some months before the Congress of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

'I mention all this to show what a chaos of ideas there is in some Communist parties and what spinelessness in certain leaders of those parties. Why have those comrades had to change their attitude on certain matters on which they criticised us? They are obliged to do so because life and practice so demand. But it all reveals an unheard-of lack of principle in the criticism of ourselves. It clearly reveals that it was no question of those things of which we were accused or attacked then or now.'

So, as the cold war drags on into its second year, Tito gets more and more confident. The agents-provocateurs sent into Yugoslavia have failed to provoke an uprising. The propaganda barrage and the economic blockade have failed to drive a wedge between Tito and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, or between Tito and the people of Yugoslavia.

It has had the reverse effect. It has rallied people opposed to Tito on personal and political grounds behind him. The Serbs, who in the past have been the hard core of the country and have supplied the pick of the fighting men to fight Yugoslavia's wars, are behind Tito, a Croat, in his fight with the Cominform, although they do not like Communism and Communists.

CHAPTER XII

Yugoslavia Forsaken

FOR some time after the breach between Yugoslavia and Soviet Russia had become unbridgeable on the question of who was to run Yugoslavia's internal policy, Yugoslavia toed the Russian line at UNO and in foreign policy.

But once Russia abandoned her support of Yugoslavia in her claims to Slovene Carinthia, in Austria, it was plain that Tito would go his own independent way in the foreign field as in the internal.

A close study of the Yugoslav and Soviet notes to each other over the matter reveals that the Yugoslav Government, after the conclusion of the second world war, formulated certain economic and territorial claims on Austria, including the demand that Slovene Carinthia and the Slovene frontier areas of Styria, covering a total territory of 2,600 square kilometres, with a population of nearly 190,000, should be transferred to Yugoslavia.

The Soviet note to the Yugoslav Government of 3rd August 1949 states that the Soviet Government undertook to support these claims and did support them at sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers, against the U.S.A., Britain and France.

The note of the Yugoslav Government of 20th August 1949 states that the Russian Foreign Minister Molotov told the Yugoslav Foreign Minister Edward Kardelj in April 1947, when a Yugoslav delegation arrived in Moscow to present claims on Austria at the session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, that there were no prospects of the Council of Foreign Ministers accepting the

Yugoslav territorial claims and it was most likely that they would be rejected in their entirety.

The note continues: 'Foreign Minister Molotov declared to E. Kardelj that despite such hopeless prospects the Soviet delegation would continue to keep the question of Slovene Carinthia on the agenda, if only to facilitate a decision regarding German assets in Austria favourable to the Soviet Union, which can be seen from the report submitted by E. Kardelj to the Yugoslav Government on 23rd April 1947.

'The Yugoslav delegation was, therefore, clearly informed that the Soviet delegation would not be able to continue its support of the Yugoslav territorial claims on Austria if the Council of Foreign Ministers reached agreement on German assets in Austria.'

It goes on: 'Finally, such a position is borne out also by the very outcome of the discussions, which shows that the Soviet Government did indeed abandon support of the Yugoslav claims, once it had achieved agreement on the question of the German assets in Austria.

'The Yugoslav Government could not but connect such a Soviet stance with the letter which Premier Stalin sent in May 1945 to State Chancellor of Austria Mr. Renner, which includes a promise regarding the immutability of Austria's frontiers. Since the Soviet Government in its note denies that this letter contains a guarantee of the Austrian frontiers from the Soviet side, the Yugoslav Government considers that it will be an objective assessment of the real state of affairs best served if it cites this letter verbatim.

'It reads: "To His Excellency State Chancellor of Austria, Mr. Renner,

"I thank you, highly esteemed comrade, for your message of April 15th. Do not doubt that your concern

for the independence, integrity (the Russian word used was 'tselostnost') and progress of Austria is also my concern. Any aid which Austria may need I am ready to offer to you to the extent of my power and possibilities. Please excuse this belated reply. Signed Stalin."

"The Soviet Government did not deem it necessary to inform the Yugoslav Government about the contents of this letter, despite the fact that the Yugoslav Government, as the Government of an allied country, might have expected this, but only at the request of the latter, made through Yugoslavia's Ambassador to Moscow V. Popovic, was the Yugoslav Government made familiar with the text of that letter.'

The Yugoslav note alleges that by abandoning support of the Yugoslav claims, Soviet Russia obtained an extra 50 million dollars' worth of reparations from the German assets in Austria.

The first Yugoslav act that might be interpreted as friendly towards the West was the closing of the Yugoslav-Greek frontier, thus preventing the Greek rebels from taking refuge from the Greek Government forces by crossing over into Yugoslavia, where they were in a position to reorganise and resume their campaign at a later date.

The real reason for this action would appear to be the change in the command of the Greek rebel troops. Following the removal of Markos, who was reported to be friendly disposed towards Tito, the Greek rebels joined the anti-Yugoslav campaign.

Edward Kardelj, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, has explained the background to this action in the following way: 'Shortly after the publication of the notorious Informburo resolution, the leadership of the Greek Communist Party began to pursue an openly hostile

policy towards Yugoslavia, carrying on intrigues against us, hushing up and denying the help which was extended by Yugoslavia to the Greek democratic forces by giving haven to wounded refugees, children, etc.

'They began intrigues on the question of the Aegean Macedonians by slandering and other hostile acts toward the New Yugoslavia. The leadership of the Greek Communist Party has of late openly joined the anti-Yugoslav campaign which was initiated by the Informburo resolution against the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

'Obviously the leadership of the Greek Communist Party has forgotten the interests of the democratic struggle in Greece and considered that its participation in the struggle against the New Yugoslavia was more important than its struggle against Greek reaction and foreign intervention in Greece. However, we kept silent about all this, not wanting to add to the difficulties of the democratic struggle of the Greek people, which are numerous as it is.

'But the leadership of the Communist Party of Greece, in return, has published the shameful and utterly base fabrication that Yugoslav representatives met Monarcho-Fascist and Anglo-American officers at the Greco-Yugoslav frontier, with the object of letting Monarcho-Fascist units cross Yugoslav territory in order to attack units of the Greek democratic army from the rear. We officially denied that any such meeting had taken place, either with Greek Monarcho-Fascist or Anglo-American officers.

'We denied that any talks had been conducted in any way with representatives of the present regime in Greece. We denied that any unit whatsoever of the Monarcho-Fascist army crossed our territory to attack the Greek

democratic army from the rear and we stressed that to the contrary a certain number of wounded democratic army troops had crossed our frontier and had all received medical attention. But despite this, the leaders of the Greek Communist Party continued to publish slanders about our "agreement" with the Monarcho-Fascists, our "aid" to the Greek Monarcho-Fascist Government.'

Marshal Tito, in a speech at Pula, explained another aspect of the closing of the Yugoslav-Greek frontier. He said: 'You read in the papers nearly every day that there are clashes on the Greek frontier as a result of the Monarcho-Fascists' disturbing law and order there, of their crossing the frontier. You will recall that recently eighteen of our soldiers came to harm, who by chance had lost their way and crossed on to Greek territory, where they were wounded or killed. You will also recall that recently an attack was made on our village of Skocivir, on which occasion also, several of our people were killed.

'In both these cases we protested, but we still don't know what response this protest of ours will have in UNO and whether there will be any positive reply or not. Some time ago Greek soldiers crossed to our territory, on which occasion a Greek soldier was killed on our territory.

'Daily there is firing and hundreds and hundreds of shells and bullets fall on our territory, as if some small war were being waged there.

'We have undertaken steps and requested UNO to do this. No appeal to the Greek Government can be successful and we cannot appeal to Tsaldaris, because we know very well what the Monarcho-Fascists are. Our protests there were of no avail. They behave very rudely and this, of course, can have a very bad future and conse-

quences for which we cannot bear the responsibility:

'Several days ago, to show you the other side of this matter and its background, Free Greece Radio reported that we, on our territory, agreed with the Monarcho-Fascists to let their army cross our territory to attack the democratic forces. I am sure that no one has to this day seen greater baseness, greater infamy, which was surely not invented by these Greek comrades, but somewhere else, and they only transmitted it.

'At the same time, when the blood of our men is being shed by the Monarcho-Fascists, there are men who accuse us of pacting with the Greek Monarcho-Fascists. Thus, the men in democratic Greece have allowed themselves to be led to a thing which can and probably will have, fatal consequences for the Greek Liberation Movement.

'They are playing with the blood which is being shed daily by heroic fighters against their oppressors, they are sullyng this blood for the sake of their dishonest aims and slandering us as well, in order to justify their resolution, to put the blame for the defeat of the Greek Democratic Army, if it should occur, on us. But they will not succeed in doing this.

'What has all this resulted in? The provocations of the Monarcho-Fascists threaten the lives of our citizens and on the other side they slander us. It has come to this, that we must gradually close this frontier and safeguard the lives of our working people in this part of our country.'

Then over the arrest of a number of White Guard émigrés who were Soviet citizens in Yugoslavia, there arose a major diplomatic incident which culminated in a note from the Soviet Government to the Yugoslav Government reminiscent of those which Hitler launched

before the outbreak of World War II.

The Soviet note read: 'The real reason for the persecution of Soviet citizens lies not in the fact that the Soviet citizens were in the past émigrés, but in the fact that they are supporters of friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia, that they do not approve of the present-day hostile policy of the Yugoslav Government towards the Soviet Union.'

The Soviet note continued: 'Of what democratic power can there be talk when Gestapo methods of rule prevail throughout Yugoslavia, when all free expression of thought is stifled, all human rights are trampled upon, when Yugoslav prisons are crowded with supporters of the Socialist camp, when the Communist Party of Yugoslavia has become a branch of the political police subordinated to Chief of Police Rankovich?'

The note gave details of the alleged treatment of named prisoners, which it said included systematic beating and deprivation of sleep, food and water.

It concluded: 'Apparently the Yugoslav Government intends to continue the practice of inhuman treatment in dealing with Soviet citizens, the practice of unlawful arrests and beatings, the practice of abusing Soviet citizens. . . . If that is the case, the Soviet Government finds it necessary to state that it will not tolerate such a situation and will have to resort to other, more effective means to protect the rights and interests of Soviet citizens in Yugoslavia and to bring to order the unrestrained Fascist offenders.'

The Soviet note called upon Yugoslav Communists to overthrow Marshal Tito and his Government.

'The task of these healthy forces,' it declared, 'is to compel their present leadership to recognise their mistakes openly and honestly and to make good for them by

breaking away from nationalism and returning to internationalism, thus strengthening the united front of Socialism against Imperialism.

'Should the leadership prove incapable of fulfilling this, it would be the duty of those healthy elements to exchange the leadership for a new internationally minded one.

'The Cominform does not doubt that the Yugoslav Communist Party will know how to carry out this honourable task.'

The Yugoslav Government and the Yugoslav people took this very calmly. The Yugoslav Government sent back a very dignified note, which read: "The Yugoslav Government does not intend to enter into argument with the Soviet Union about the character of the regime in Yugoslavia, about the real purpose of the Cominform resolution and about whether or not Yugoslav economy has become an appendage to the economics of Capitalist countries.

'The facts of Yugoslavia's Foreign Trade and the principles upon which it rests are public and well known, which is also the case with the internal situation in our country, so that it is not necessary to offer a separate explanation of this on this occasion. All the more so as the Government of the U.S.S.R., responsible Soviet leaders and the Soviet propaganda organs have ignored all these facts and have represented them in a false light in order to justify, in any way whatsoever, their acts toward Yugoslavia before public opinion.

'However, the Government of Yugoslavia considers that it is its duty to emphasise that the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia is an independent and sovereign state and that its peoples and its Government are, under no conditions, willing to allow anyone whomsoever to

interfere in their internal affairs. Further, the Yugoslav Government also underlines that no pressure from outside has so far had any effect on its internal policy nor will it have in future. As regards Yugoslavia's Foreign Policy, the Yugoslav Government considers it also necessary to emphasise that it is pursuing its Foreign Policy in accordance with the independence and sovereignty of the country, in accordance with progressive principles of peace and co-operation among peoples and states, on the basis of equality and mutual respect of sovereignty according to international agreements and obligations which have been and remain public acts of the Yugoslav Government. The peoples and Government of Yugoslavia are not willing to renounce these principles because of pressure from outside, under any circumstances.

'The Yugoslav Government expresses its surprise that the arrest of a few White Guards who are Soviet citizens, people with a dark past who violated the laws and hospitality of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, could provoke such an insulting, harsh and unfounded note from the U.S.S.R. Government. The Yugoslav Government's surprise is all the greater in so far as the Soviet Government at the same time passes in silence over the repatriation of Yugoslav children from the Soviet Union, for which their parents and guardians and the Yugoslav Government have repeatedly asked, and also ignores the repatriation of citizens of Yugoslav nationality living in the Soviet Union, to whom the Soviet Government has still not issued exit visas, although they have in no way violated the laws of the Soviet Union and are at liberty.

'The Yugoslav Government observes that the assertions regarding the behaviour of the Yugoslav organs

towards certain Soviet citizens, most of whom are former White Guard émigrés, are entirely fabricated, untrue and insulting. The persons mentioned, as has already been mentioned in a whole series of notes from the Yugoslav Government, were placed in custody owing to the fact that they seriously violated the laws of Yugoslavia by their espionage and hostile activities against Yugoslavia, which as a sovereign state has the right to protect itself from such activities.

‘However, despite the fact that there is undeniable proof of the guilt of these persons, the Yugoslav Government, expressing its good will to solve disputes between the two governments, is ready to extradite the arrested persons to the Soviet Government in the shortest possible time.

‘At the same time, the Yugoslav Government states its readiness to make it possible for all those Soviet citizens residing permanently in Yugoslavia who express a desire to leave Yugoslavia, to do so immediately and to place all facilities at their disposal in this respect.

‘The Yugoslav Government and its most responsible representatives have always declared their preparedness to solve all disputed questions between the two states by agreement. On this occasion, the Yugoslav Government repeats its resolution and declares its readiness to approach the solution of all disputed questions with the U.S.S.R. in accordance with and in the spirit of the international obligations undertaken by both Governments.’

Three weeks later, Alesh Bebler, the Assistant Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, alleged that Russia was trying to impose two characteristic aspects of relations on Yugoslavia.

‘First, with the application of the principle of Foreign

Policy consultations, the Soviet Government tried to direct—in fact, without any consultation—the Yugoslav Government's whole foreign policy. The Government of the U.S.S.R. in practice demanded that the Yugoslav Government should not make one single, even least important step in foreign policy, without previous approval of the Soviet Government, while the Soviet Government on its part, not only took steps in foreign policy which concerned Yugoslavia without consulting her Government, but even without informing the Yugoslav Government of its intention to take this or that step.

Thus, for example, the Soviet delegation in the Four Power Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris in 1947 accepted the so-called French line of demarcation between Yugoslavia and Italy, without even breathing one word of this to the Yugoslav Delegation which was in Paris at the time and had daily contact with the Soviet Delegation.

'Second, the Government of the U.S.S.R. tried to gain the upper hand in internal policy, the State apparatus (including the Army), the economy of Yugoslavia, the creation inside the Government (Zujovich and Hebrang), inside the General Staff (Arso Yovanovich) and in all major State enterprises, wherever it could, its agents, not only for intelligence work but also for carrying through various directives which were contrary to the interests and sovereignty of the Yugoslav peoples, otherwise they would not have had to be secret or else they would have lost their meaning.'

On 1st December 1949, ten White Russians, including one woman, who became Soviet citizens after the war, were put on trial at Sarajevo, accused of espionage, collaboration with the enemy during the war and conspiring to overthrow the Tito regime.

Some of these are believed to have been among the thirty-one White Russians whom Yugoslavia offered in August to repatriate, but so far as is known, Russia did not reply to the offer.

The trial opened with the announcement that Vladimir Nekludov, lay assistant to the head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, had hanged himself in his cell, leaving behind a letter, in which it was alleged that he had confessed to having worked for the Soviet Secret Service.

The prosecutor alleged that the accused operated a spy ring under the direct control of the Soviet Embassy in Belgrade.

The chief defendant was Father Alexei Krisko, a grey-bearded Czarist priest, who took Soviet citizenship in 1946. He denied having worked for the German Gestapo during the war, but admitted 'partial guilt' in supplying information to the Soviet intelligence services in Belgrade. He confessed to having sent Nekludov letters containing what appeared to have been mostly commonplace and inaccurate information about internal conditions in Yugoslavia.

It was alleged that some of the information concerned the arrest or maltreatment of White Russians by Yugoslav Security Police and was sent in primitive code.

The prosecutor said that the Cominform made use of this information for anti-Tito propaganda, but Father Krisko contended that as he was not a Yugoslav, he did not regard this action as anti-national.

Father Krisko admitted that he knew the contents of his letters were being passed on to the Soviet Embassy in Belgrade. He also admitted having twice visited the Embassy after the passing of the Cominform resolution and having received instructions from officials there.

He further admitted having helped recruit White Russians and Red Army prisoners of war for Hitler's White Russian volunteer corps.

He told the People's Tribunal: 'I am not afraid of the Court and I am not afraid even of death!'

The only woman accused, Xenia Komad, confessed to having worked for the Gestapo. She admitted that she lived with Father Krisko during the war.

The State Prosecutor did not demand the death penalty. He invoked a paragraph of the law governing crimes against the people and the State providing for a maximum of twenty years' hard labour. At the conclusion of the trial, he recommended clemency for the four youngest accused and 'just punishment' for the remainder.

The Sarajevo Court found all ten 'Guilty' of working for the Soviet Secret Service and six were also found 'Guilty' of collaborating with the enemy during the war.

The longest sentence was imposed on Arsen Boremovich, who was found 'Guilty' on both charges and received twenty years' hard labour. Boremovich, a lawyer, was alleged to have been responsible for the sentencing to death of twenty-seven Yugoslavs by a Fascist court-martial in which he acted as prosecutor.

Father Krisko was sentenced to eleven years' hard labour and Xenia Komad to three years; Vladimir Ognyev to six years, Vasili Kostrukov to five, and Anatole Polyakov to ten.

The four youngest accused, Ilija Zerebkov, Vadim Gesler, George Olshevski and Peter Sokolov, received six, five, four and a half and four years' hard labour. All the accused had their property confiscated and were deprived of their rights of citizenship for varying periods of time after leaving prison.

The significance of this trial lay in the fact that Tito felt himself strong enough to defy the Soviet Union to the extent of putting Soviet citizens on trial. He had, however, pretty good grounds for believing that the Russians would do nothing to save their compatriots. He offered to repatriate them, but the Russians did not reply to the offer, indicating that they were prepared to abandon them to their fate. A significant reflection on the value of Soviet citizenship.

There was no Russian reaction to the Court's decision.

CHAPTER XIII

Yugoslavia on Trial

IN September 1949, there opened in Budapest the trial of Laszlo Rajk, former Minister of the Interior and former Foreign Minister and member of the Hungarian Politburo; General George Palffy, former Chief of Staff of the Hungarian Army and a leading Communist; Lazar Brankov, former Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires in Budapest, and five others.

They were accused of conspiracy, with Yugoslav help, to overthrow the Hungarian Government, by plotting the murder of Mr. Rakosi, the Secretary-General of the Communist Party and deputy Prime Minister, and of Mr. Gero and General Farkas, the two other most powerful Communists in the country. Mr. Gero is Chief of the Economic Council and General Farkas is the Minister of Defence.

Other accusations were espionage on behalf of Yugoslavia and the Western Powers and war crimes.

Although Laszlo Rajk was the principal accused in the dock and was ultimately sentenced to death, the trial came to be regarded more as the trial of Marshal Tito, with Rajk as the poor dupe. That was the impression that those who engineered the trial set out to create.

The highlight of the trial was Rajk's 'confession', in which he alleged that he had a secret meeting with 'General Rankovich' in autumn 1948 on the Hungarian-Yugoslav frontier.

Presumably the 'General Rankovich' referred to was Alexander Rankovich, the Yugoslav Minister of Interior.

This trial, as the Russian and Cominform barrage

earlier on, provoked a united outburst from Yugoslavs in all walks of life.

Marshal Tito himself personally handed to the Hungarian Minister in Belgrade, Kerestes Sandor, in the presence of Assistant Foreign Minister Vladimir Popovic, a strongly worded note. Tito took this step as acting Foreign Minister, in the absence of the Foreign Minister, Edward Kardelj.

The note attributed the change in the Hungarian attitude towards Yugoslavia, as revealed in the trial, as being due to the fact that 'the Hungarian Government has deviated from the policy of friendship and co-operation with Yugoslavia to a policy of hostility towards Yugoslavia and its peoples; that the Hungarian Government has joined the plot organised by the Government of the U.S.S.R. with the aim of overthrowing the lawful Government of Yugoslavia and disrupting the Socialist order in Yugoslavia and of imposing a "Government" upon the peoples of Yugoslavia which would accept unequal relations of subjugation such as the Government of the U.S.S.R. has imposed upon Hungary and other people's democracies.

'The following facts are proof of the inimical policy of the Hungarian Government:

'The furious campaign against Yugoslavia, its Government and the Yugoslav people after the announcement of the Cominform resolution. In this campaign, in which the most responsible statesmen of Hungary, such as Vice-President of the Government Matyas Rakosi are participating and members of the Government Mihaly Farkas, Joseph Revai and others, the citizens of Yugoslavia are called upon to destroy the existing Socialist order in Yugoslavia and overthrow the lawful Government of Yugoslavia.

'A regime of the blackest police terror has been instituted against the Yugoslav National Minority in Hungary, while the organisation of the Democratic Federation of South Slavs has been placed under the control of police commissioners. Members of Yugoslav National Minorities are arrested and abused, their homes are searched; villages where there is a Yugoslav National Minority are blocked off.

'A curfew has been established in border regions and the movements of those belonging to Yugoslav National Minorities are restricted. In this manner, the fundamental minority rights of Yugoslavs in Hungary are ruthlessly trampled underfoot and their free national and cultural development is made impossible.

'Through its frontier organs the Hungarian Government has begun a series of incidents and increasingly frequent armed provocations on the Yugoslav-Hungarian border. The Hungarian border authorities cross over to Yugoslav territory, shoot at Yugoslav border patrols, move frontier demarcation signs, etc., while Hungarian aeroplanes violate Yugoslav airspace.

'For the purpose of hostile and espionage activities the Hungarian State Security Department (A.V.O.) upon orders from the Hungarian Government, illegally smuggled criminal-fascist elements into Yugoslavia, like Peter Huszta, Janos Szabo, Antal Kovacs, Tiela Kermendi and others, with the aim of undermining the existing order in Yugoslavia and systematically deteriorating relations between Yugoslavia and Hungary.

'The hostility being disseminated by the Hungarian Government against Yugoslavia also found expression in the behaviour of the Hungarian authorities towards official and diplomatic representatives of Yugoslavia in Budapest. Employees of the Legation of Yugoslavia in

Hungary, regardless of the diplomatic immunity which they enjoy, were arrested, physically abused, evicted and attempts were made to inveigle them into service in the Hungarian intelligence. The Hungarian Government has already several times evicted from Hungary, without any basis whatsoever, almost all the employees of the Yugoslav Legation in Budapest, from the Chargé d'Affaires down to the last office employee.

'The Hungarian Government offers refuge to traitors, deserters and emigrants from Yugoslavia and gives them extensive support, aid and means in their criminal subversive and counter-revolutionary activity against Yugoslavia.

'All the aforementioned inimical acts by the Government of Hungary towards Yugoslavia represent the worst and most appalling violation of the agreement of alliance between Yugoslavia and Hungary which is turned into a dead letter by such behaviour by the Hungarian Government.

'At the same time the Hungarian Government has ruthlessly violated, and is still doing so, all her other international obligations towards Yugoslavia. Unilaterally trampling and breaking off all the abovementioned economic agreements, the Hungarian Government has inflicted considerable damage upon the Yugoslav economy, owing her the sum of about 20 million dollars. The Hungarian Government is doing this with the object of preventing the peoples of Yugoslavia from fulfilling the Five Year Plan of Socialist Construction, for which reason she joined the economic blockade against Yugoslavia being carried out by the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Poland and Rumania. The Hungarian Government has violated all those obligations towards Yugoslavia, issuing from the Peace Treaty with Hungary by completely

halting reparations deliveries and evicting the Yugoslav Reparations Delegation from Hungary.

'Since all the hostile acts and behaviour aimed against Yugoslavia, as well as the entire campaign, already in its second year, being waged by the Hungarian Government and the Governments of the other aforementioned countries, have only resulted in the still greater consolidation of the moral-political unity of the Yugoslav peoples and in an increase of their efforts and feats in the building of Socialism, which the Cominform leaders do not want to see, it was necessary to resort to ever more and more ignominious and shameful means in the struggle against Yugoslavia.

'This led to the organisation of the falsification and lies of the engineered court comedy in Budapest. The defendants sitting in the dock were only incidental figures of second-rate importance who learned their provocative role by rote, while the main defendant was supposed to be Yugoslavia and her Government. This most recent criminal provocation against Socialist Yugoslavia and her Government, which has actually boomeranged on its authors, is a disgusting attack on the honour, independence and sovereign rights of the Yugoslav peoples won in the National Liberation War and popular revolution. Carrying out an openly hostile, provocative and aggressive policy towards Yugoslavia, the Hungarian Government has no moral right to make any accusations whatsoever against Yugoslavia and her Government which always pursued a policy of friendship and good-neighbourly relations towards the Hungarian People's Republic.

'The monstrous provocations which have taken place in Budapest, with openly aggressive and subversive intentions toward a neighbouring country and its Government

represent a warmongering act which becomes part of the warmongering campaign of the biggest enemies of peace and progress, will contribute to the creation of war psychosis in the world and inflict a heavy blow upon international co-operation and peace in this part of Europe.

‘Today, when the forces of peace and progress in the whole world are in imperative need of unity, comprehensive and full co-operation in the struggle against the provokers of war and international reaction, this newest provocation in Budapest represents a senseless and criminal action against the front of peace and democracy in the world and against the unity of the international working-class movement. The responsibility before the world democratic and progressive public and before history for the immeasurable and harmful consequences which may issue from this falls exclusively and entirely on the Hungarian Government and those who stand behind it.’

The Yugoslav Chief Prosecutor, Dr. Josip Hrnjcevic, commented that the trial was reminiscent of the Dreyfus trial, the Leipzig proceedings and Friedjung’s trial.

He said: ‘French reaction and Hitler each in their time organised the trial against Dreyfus and the Leipzig proceeding was based upon lies and false evidence. Austro-Hungarian reaction staged the trial against Friedjung in order to justify the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to prepare aggression against Serbia.’

‘Actually this trial was conducted against Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav State and political leadership. This follows from the indictment and court proceedings. This is explicitly confirmed by Moscow and other Cominform Press and radio. According to the scheme of its inspirers,

this trial should once again confirm all those lies and fabrications against Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav leadership which are day by day being repeated by Cominform propaganda in accordance with Moscow's dictate and especially to advance evidence for the fabrications and slanders given in the two last notes which the Soviet Government addressed to the Yugoslav Government.

'At the same time, this trial is to give the Soviet Government moral-political justification before the International Workers' Movement and world public opinion for its hostile acts against Yugoslavia.'

Dr. Hrnjcevic commented on the alleged meeting between Alexander Rankovich, the Yugoslav Minister of Interior, and Rajk: 'The indictment does not give any date, but cites the vague formulation "in the beginning of October", because it would be simple to prove that one of the most significant parts of the indictment was entirely fabricated, because had the indictment stated the exact date of this alleged meeting, it would have been easy to ascertain where Minister Rankovich actually was on that day.'

The Chief Prosecutor concludes: 'After the murder of workers' leader Kocji Dzodze, committed also through the medium of a staged trial, which took place recently in Albania, at Tirana, the Budapest trial is a second and even more serious case of political banditism, which is being performed on the judicial platform by the leaders of the Cominform against Socialist Yugoslavia. We do not doubt that honourable men will be found in the workers' and democratic movement in the world this time, too, who, as was the case during the Dreyfus, Friedjung and Leipzig trials, will raise their voices against this judicial scandal in Budapest.'

Yugoslav volunteers who fought in the Spanish Re-

publican Army as part of the International Brigades held a special conference in Yugoslavia at which they drafted a protest condemning the Cominform campaign against Yugoslavia and the 'slander flung at Yugoslavia and Yugoslav fighters in Spain in the indictment drawn up against Laszlo Rajk'.

The protest was signed by all ninety-eight former fighters in Spain present, including Blagoje Neshkovich, Vice-Premier of the Yugoslav Government and President of the Yugoslav State Control Commission; Colonel-General Ivan Gosnjak, Deputy Minister of Defence; Colonel-General Koca Popovich, Chief of Staff; Colonel-General Peko Dapchevich, National Liberation War Hero; Karlo Mrazovich, Yugoslav Ambassador to Moscow; Bozidar Maslarich, Yugoslav Minister of Transport; Vladimir Popovich, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs; Colonel-General Kosta Nadj; Lieutenant-General Danilo Lekich, and Lieutenant-General Dusan Kveder.

The protest reads: 'How low the Cominform followers in Hungary have fallen is seen from the fact that the indictment terms as Gestapoists 150 fighters from the Spanish War, who returned to Yugoslavia in 1941 from French concentration camps, and under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, participated actively in the organisation and leadership of the armed uprising and people's revolution.

'It appears to be in someone's interest today to fling mud at men who, thirteen years ago, took arms in hand to fight against Fascism, at men who through long years of struggle, won the love and esteem of their people, at men whom the working people raised to the highest positions of state administration, because these men, who proved their internationalism not in words, but in deeds,

are an obstacle to the leaders of the anti-Yugoslav campaign, because they condemn the Cominform resolution and because they are combating unequal relationships among Socialist countries, which the leaders of the Soviet Union wish to impose upon Socialist Yugoslavia today.

'It seems that they are unconcerned that, by proclaiming Spanish fighters from Yugoslavia to be Gestapo agents, they are besmirching the heroic International Brigades, besmirching not only us, the living, but also our numerous comrades who returned to Yugoslavia in 1941, in that group of 150 fighters of the Spanish War, and died a heroic death at the head of our units.'

The conference recalled the role which the volunteers from Yugoslavia played in the war for the defence of democracy in Spain.

'There were 1,200 of these volunteers and over 600 of them fell at the ramparts of Madrid, in Jarama, in the Aragon Mountains and other Spanish battlefields. From the ranks of Yugoslav volunteers 148 were promoted officers of the Spanish Republican Army, 133 to the rank of N.C.O., 48 political commissars, and 35 were secretaries of Party organisations in various units of the Spanish Republican Army.'

The conference sent a telegram to Tito which read: 'The amazing counter-revolutionary attack on our country by the Informburo, which is nothing more than a blind weapon of certain leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B) has brought internationalism into crisis.'

'The blinded leaders of the Soviet Communist Party (B) have begun treading underfoot, one after the other, the principles of internationalism, destroying the moral achievements and spitting on the traditions of inter-

nationalism. The newest attack on internationalism is the indictment which the obedient clique in Hungary has drawn up, not against Răjk, but against Yugoslavia, the International Brigades and the International Proletariat in general.

‘Such amazing slanders could only be made by one who has not only deserted Internationalism, but also has become the enemy and opponent of Internationalism.’

It concluded by pledging the signatories ‘that we will continue to be in the front ranks of the struggle for correct relations among socialist countries, in the front ranks of work on the construction of Socialism in our country’.

CHAPTER XIV

Lukewarm War

EVENTS now started to move rapidly towards a climax. Yugoslavia informed the heads of the diplomatic missions of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A. in Hungary that Hungary had stopped reparations deliveries to Yugoslavia, thereby violating the Peace Treaty and asking them to make a joint examination, under Article 40 of the Hungarian Peace Treaty of the dispute between Yugoslavia and Hungary.

This was on 27th September.

On 28th September, the Soviet Union followed up its threatening note by denouncing the Soviet-Yugoslav Friendship Pact signed in Moscow on 11th April 1945 for twenty years.

The Soviet note read: 'In the course of the trial of the State criminal and spy Rajk and his accomplices, who also were spies of the Yugoslav Government, which ended on September 24th in Budapest, it was revealed that the Yugoslav Government has already for a long time been carrying on profoundly hostile disruptive activity against the Soviet Union, hypocritically masked by mendacious assurances of "friendship" for the Soviet Union.

'The Budapest trial has also shown that the leaders of the Yugoslav Government have conducted and are continuing to conduct their hostile and disruptive work against the U.S.S.R. not only on their own initiative, but under the direct instructions of foreign imperialist circles. The facts revealed at this trial further showed that the present Yugoslav Government is completely dependent on foreign imperialist circles, and has become

transformed into an instrument of their aggressive policy which was bound to lead, and has in fact led, to the liquidation of the independence and autonomy of the Yugoslav Republic.

'All these facts testify that the Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Post-War Co-operation between the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia, concluded on 11th April 1945, has been rudely trampled upon and torn to pieces by the present Yugoslav Government. On the basis of the aforesaid, the Soviet Government declares that the Soviet Union from now on deems itself free from the obligations ensuing from the abovementioned treaty.'

The denunciation of this treaty can only be interpreted as a last warning to Tito to bow the knee to the Kremlin, because to all intents and purposes, the treaty had for over a year been a dead letter. The miniature cold war that had raged between Russia and Yugoslavia made the treaty merely a scrap of paper.

It was a treaty which Marshal Tito had personally signed in Moscow, in the presence of Marshal Stalin. The Russian signatory was Molotov.

The principal paragraph was to the effect that the two countries agreed to co-operate in the international field, and to strengthen economic and cultural ties.

However, the Yugoslav Government sent a calmly worded reply which was handed by the Assistant Foreign Minister of the Yugoslav Government Vladimir Popovich to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Belgrade.

The Yugoslav note reads: 'The peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples of Yugoslavia and the whole of Democratic world opinion are witness of the unilateral and arbitrary annulment of precisely this treaty of friendship between the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, as well as of the efforts

of the Soviet Government to use this as a means of blackmail and pressure on the Yugoslav peoples and their free and independent homeland.'

It added: 'With diplomatic notes full of insults and threats, followed by demonstrative Soviet troop movements in neighbouring countries along the Yugoslav border and with other similar measures, the Soviet Government attempted to intimidate the Yugoslav peoples and to exercise pressure upon them in order to realise its undemocratic and anti-Socialist intentions which are in greatest contradiction to the foreign policy pronounced by the Soviet Government during the Second World War and after.

'Here is how the Premier of the Soviet Government, J. V. Stalin, formulated the principles of this policy in his address of November 6th, 1941:

'“We have not and cannot have such war aims as imposing our will and our regime upon the Slav and other enslaved peoples of Europe, who expect help from us. It is our aim to help these peoples in their liberation struggle against Hitlerite tyranny and then to let them freely organise life in their countries as they wish to. There can be no interference in the internal affairs of other peoples.”'

The note went on: 'The abrogation of this treaty by the Soviet Government has not surprised the Government or peoples of Yugoslavia. By its series of earlier acts the Soviet Government had, in fact, tramped upon this Treaty and turned it into a dead letter. The formal denunciation of the treaty represents a new, grave action which discloses the non-peace-loving intentions of the Soviet Government towards Yugoslavia. Such conduct by the Soviet Government is of benefit only to the most reactionary quarters in the world and to their war-

mongering campaign; it is a contribution to the creation of war psychosis and inflicts a heavy blow upon international co-operation and peace.

'The Yugoslav Government notes that the Soviet Government has not undertaken a similar step after World War II against any other, even capitalist country, despite the fact that the policies of some of these countries were characterised by the Soviet Government as being hostile and anti-Soviet.'

Marshal Tito followed up this reply a few days later with a speech to 600 generals, officers and guests held after the manoeuvres of the Yugoslav Army south of Belgrade.

He said: 'We are building up a modern army not to menace anyone, but so that it might be our bastion in the struggle for truth. Our aim is to spread the truth about ourselves and our attitude throughout the world. Love of our country, our people; we love every foot of our land, because it is soaked in the blood of our best sons and we are prepared to defend every foot of land till the last breath, wherever an attack may come from.'

'Our vital goal is to unmask the real features of those who use lies and slander us and our country and in this way to contribute to the victory of Socialist morals in the world, to restore confidence, which has begun to waver, in Socialist ideas, to restore the faith of every people and working class in all countries in their own strength, because they are capable and are entitled to fight for their liberation, for their happier future, without waiting for someone else to come and free them.'

He went on: 'Comrade officers and generals, we have held these manoeuvres in an exceptional situation, at a time when, in the foreign political respect, our country

is in a rather difficult position, when from all sides moral and political pressure is being brought to bear on her; at a moment when the most diverse slanders and lies are being showered upon her; in short, when efforts are being made to intimidate our people and shatter their unity and prevent the successful construction of Socialism. We have not undertaken these manoeuvres as any kind of counteraction to the various threats, but because it was a need usually practised by a modern army.'

Stressing that Yugoslavia is a peace-loving country and that Yugoslavia has never yet menaced anyone, nor will do so, Marshal Tito said: 'No one has the right, whoever he may be, to menace a small nation which shed so much blood and made so many sacrifices in the recent war against Fascist aggression, and which will not allow itself to be slandered and sullied without any reason whatever. No one, whoever it may be, may threaten war upon such a country only because the people of this country refuse to keep silent in face of such insults and slanders, but rather defend themselves with truthful facts.

'This is how we look at the matter; we have the right to call a lie a lie and a falsehood a falsehood.

'Defending and safeguarding truth, we can confidently face the future, regardless of what is happening or may happen. And you know, comrades, that it is better to fall in battle for justice and truth than to bow the head slavishly and see how, without any resistance, the great principles of Marxism-Leninism are being destroyed.'

The Rajk trial was followed by the trial of the former Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister, Traicho Kostov, in December 1949.

Alarmed at the spread of the independent spirit among the satellites, the Russians hastened to take action

before another Tito emerged to defy the authority of the Kremlin.

Bulgaria had shown unmistakable signs of independence, inasmuch as the Bulgarian leader Georgi Dimitrov had discussed with Tito the formation of a Yugoslav-Bulgarian Federation and the two leaders had also had talks over the question of Macedonia.

Dimitrov had been rebuked for this initiative and summoned to Moscow, where he fell ill and, rather conveniently for the Kremlin, died.

Kostov, a Communist hero, although not such a world figure as Dimitrov, was credited with having supported Dimitrov in the scheme for a Yugoslav-Bulgarian Federation. He was regarded as Dimitrov's natural successor and had also shown his independence by standing up for Bulgaria's interests in trade talks with Russia.

The Rajk trial put Tito as well as Rajk on trial at the bar of Communist opinion. The Kostov trial also put Tito on trial, as well as Kostov. The heresy hunt was getting well under way. But the Kostov trial proved a boomerang even more than the Rajk trial.

The Russians had not dared to arrest Dimitrov and put him on trial for his independence. They glorified him after his death, and immediately he was buried put Kostov, who had been in jail since March, on trial for having followed in Dimitrov's footsteps.

It is quite plain that the Russians plan to terrorise their satellites into complete submission by a series of trials of Communist Party officials who have at one time or another shown signs of independence and been removed from office. These trials are nothing more or less than a highly propagandised form of murder.

Titoism, or independent national-communism, is a growing force. It must therefore be stamped out in each

satellite country in turn, with all the fanfare of Communist Party propaganda and publicity, calculated to blacken the names of men who, in many cases, served the Communist Party only too well, but remembered their nationality and their national interests, too.

Tito's stand against the Kremlin has panicked the Russians into taking these measures and others, calculated to tighten their grip on those countries plunged in darkness behind the Iron Curtain.

The cannibalism and pathological fear psychosis on which Communism is founded is now openly revealing itself before the world in all its grim bloodthirstiness, with death at the gallows as the ultimate reward for faithful service.

Kostov and ten others were accused of plotting to overthrow the Bulgarian Communist Government, the arrest and murder of the then Bulgarian Prime Minister, Georgi Dimitrov, the detachment of Bulgaria from the Soviet Union and 'its attachment to Yugoslavia as the eighth Yugoslav Republic under the leadership of Marshal Tito'.

Publication of the indictment which listed the accusations against the accused was the first occasion on which Soviet Russia openly claimed that a satellite country is part of Soviet territory, although for all practical purposes the satellites might just as well have been merged into Russia. 'Detachment of Bulgaria from the Soviet Union' was specifically listed as one of the accusations against Kostov.

There was one blatant mistake in the indictment. It stated that attachment of Bulgaria to Yugoslavia would make Bulgaria the eighth Yugoslav Republic. Yugoslavia is composed of six republics, therefore attachment of Bulgaria would make her the seventh.

The indictment dragged in Bela Kun, head of the shortlived Communist Government in Hungary in 1919. Kostov was accused of having had the closest contact with him. This was apparently criminal, 'because, according to the latest Communist theory, Bela Kun was a Trotskyist.

Kostov was also accused of having had the closest contact with another 'Trotskyist' named 'Walter' in Moscow in 1934. 'Walter' was the pseudonym of Josip Broz-Tito when he was leader of the émigré Yugoslav Communists in Moscow.

Kostov was alleged to have been a British Secret Service agent since 1942 and to have denounced Communist colleagues when arrested in 1942. He was alleged to have agreed to work as a police agent in exchange for his life. Both these accusations were made against Rajk. The indictment also alleged that Kostov admitted that he received instructions from Mr. Donald Heath, the American Minister in Sofia, to collaborate with Marshal Tito for the detachment of Bulgaria from the Soviet Union.

The indictment, which was published before the trial opened, contained the customary alleged confession which has become part and parcel of the paraphernalia of Communist trials. This one, attributed to Kostov, ran to 32,000 words.

The alleged confession quoted extensively from conversations with Marshal Tito and described a trip across Bulgaria with Marshal Tito in November 1947, in which 'a satisfied smile never left Tito's face. He looked as if Bulgaria were already his.'

This alleged confession claimed that Tito told Kostov that he would soon break with the Soviet Union, as he felt that backward countries like Yugoslavia and Bulgaria

could not do without the Marshall Plan. The confession further stated that Tito told Kostov that the Americans stipulated that Tito should break with the Soviet Union as a condition for receiving financial help.

The alleged confession continued: 'He demanded urgent action on my part. He said I must get our sympathisers into leading posts to take over the Government and immediately announce the union of Bulgaria with Yugoslavia.'

Another admission which the alleged confession included was that Kostov was responsible in 1934 for sending Marshal Tito to Yugoslavia from Moscow to take over the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party.

The names of Colonel William Bailey, described as the head of the British Secret Service in the Balkans, a Mr. Stanley Brown and a Commander Frank Gosling were mentioned in the alleged confession as British Secret Service agents from whom Kostov was alleged to have received instructions.

The alleged confession took the Court President three hours to read when the trial opened in Sofia on 7th December 1949. Kostov, a short stocky figure, with the face of an intellectual, created a sensation by repudiating it on the first day.

In a quiet voice, he pleaded 'Not Guilty' to the main charges against him and denied that he had spied for Yugoslavia, Britain or the United States. He denied strenuously that he had denounced members of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1942, when six of the arrested men were shot and Kostov, although their leader, was sentenced to life imprisonment; he denied that he had acted as a police agent, that he had worked for British intelligence under

Colonel William Bailey; that he was responsible in 1934 in Moscow for sending Tito to Yugoslavia to take over the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party; that he had conspired with the Yugoslavs for Marshal Tito to take over Bulgaria; that he had placed police agents from his prison days in leading positions inside the Communist Party and Government.

He pleaded 'Guilty' to charges of hostility towards the Soviet Union, of lack of vigilance in allowing hostile elements to penetrate the Communist Party and the Government and of betraying certain State secrets.

He said in court: 'I also feel guilty in that, by my actions, I tried to drive a wedge between the Politburo and the Central Committee of the Communist Party. I attacked Comrade Dimitrov personally and tried to lessen his authority. All these things are the fruits of my individualism and personal ambitions and are, of course, incompatible with leadership of the Communist Party.'

He said that he had falsely estimated the internal situation and the power of the capitalists and 'kulaks' even though they were defeated, but all these were ideological matters.

The alleged confession said that in 1942 Kostov signed a document agreeing to work for the police, after he had been under torture for ten days following the arrest of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party. In return, said the alleged confession, he and three other members of the Central Committee who also broke down under torture had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

After the war, the alleged confession continued, Kostov was confronted with these documents by Colonel William Bailey in the home of the chief of the British Military Mission in Bulgaria, General William Oxley

Colonel Bailey then recruited Kostov as a British agent, according to the alleged confession.

In court, Kostov denied all this. He said that if his death sentence was commuted in 1942, it might have been because of his bearing in court and the fact that he did not confess. 'It might also have been because an old school friend of mine was at that time secretary to King Boris,' he added.

In answer to the accusation that he had conspired with the present Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Edward Kardelj, to attach Bulgaria to Yugoslavia, Kostov said that before Kardelj arrived in Sofia in 1944 the Yugoslavs had proposed that Bulgaria should be joined to Yugoslavia and that the Bulgarian Army should be placed under the command of Marshal Tito.

Kostov continued: 'I informed the Central Committee of this, and in view of its importance, Dimitrov submitted the proposal to Moscow. In the end we made proposals for a federation of the two countries, but on our conditions.'

Kostov said in court that at a later meeting in Belgrade in 1946 with Marshal Tito and the Yugoslav Minister of Interior, Alexander Rankovich, the main difference between the proposals of the two countries was that the Yugoslavs wanted to annex Pirin Macedonia from Bulgaria, while the Bulgars wanted to exchange the Pirin region for territory ceded to Yugoslavia after the first World War.

He commented on the Yugoslav Minister of Interior: 'I found Rankovich quite a limited man, with perhaps some organisational ability. I went to a banquet with him where he had to propose a toast. All he could say was "Long live Stalin" and then sat down again. A man of very limited capabilities.'

Kostov repeated on 13th December his denial that he was guilty of espionage or treason. It was a dramatic moment when he made his final statement with flood-lights turned full on him and facing a battery of cameras. He said calmly: 'I must say again that I was never a police agent, never an imperialist spy. I have always had respect for the Soviet Union.'

His defence counsel, Lueben Diukmejiev, apologised for defending Kostov and neatly summed up in two sentences the whole farce of Soviet trials. He said: 'In a Socialist court, there is no division of duty between judge, prosecutor and defence counsel. The defence must assist the prosecution to find the objective truth in a case.'

He then apologetically offered two points in Kostov's favour, emphasising that Kostov had asked him to make these points. One was that Kostov presented an anti-Tito report at the Bucharest meeting of the Cominform which ended in the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform.

The second point was very involved. It was that at the Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party in June 1948, Tito made a speech in which he said that the Yugoslav Communists had always believed that Kostov and Gechev were agents for some foreign power. Gechev was the police chief who was alleged to be a British agent and to have made a bargain with Kostov to save Kostov's life in return for Kostov's signed declaration to co-operate with the police.

Diukmejiev said that Tito continued: 'Some comrades among us expressed doubt for a long time, but the police agents disappeared and Gechev fled to Turkey.'

Diukmejiev asked: 'How was Tito able to link up Kostov with Gechev?' and went on to claim that Tito

was only covering up his tracks for the day when Kostov would be arrested so that he could prove that Kostov had not been his agent.

Surprisingly enough, in spite of his strenuous denials, Kostov did not take advantage of his right to cross-examine or challenge witnesses more than once and this was on only a minor point.

On 14th December, Kostov was found 'Guilty' on all charges and heard the death sentence passed on him for the second time in his life. The prosecutor had demanded the death sentence for Kostov and four of the other ten accused. Sentences passed on the other ten ranged from life imprisonment to eight years' imprisonment.

Kostov appealed against the death sentence, but the Praesidium of the National Assembly rejected the appeal and the former Deputy Premier was executed by hanging on 16th December.

Thus passed the man who wrote the Bulgarian Communist Constitution, adopted in December 1947, and author of most of the Bulgarian Communist Party literature, the man who was to be Dimitrov's successor, the man who directed the Bulgarian Communist resistance movement during the war.

Kostov became a member of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1924, a member of the Politburo in 1935, secretary of the Central Committee Party of Bulgaria in 1940 and Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Bulgaria in 1944. As Cabinet Minister, he was in charge of financial, economic and trade ministries, as well as being author and controller of the Five Year Plan.

Such was the crisis that his arrest in March caused that the elections had to be postponed until after his trial had been held. For nine months he was kept in jail, but his

spirit was unbroken to the end.

The complete cynicism with which these matters are dealt by Soviet Russia is indicated by the great fuss that was made over Dimitrov after his opportune death in Moscow. He was given an imposing funeral in Sofia and a monument was erected to him. Yet he was associated more than Kostov with the plan for the Yugoslav-Bulgarian Federation.

On 7th December, Vladimir Dedijer, head of the Yugoslav Government Information Department, who had remained in the background until Yugoslavia appealed to UNO, emerged from his semi-retirement and issued a statement in which the attitude of the Yugoslav Government to the Kostov trial was summed up.

It read: 'The Sofia trial is in the first place aimed at the independence and good name of Yugoslavia. Like the Budapest trial, it has been staged with the purpose of justifying past and future measures of pressure by the U.S.S.R. against Yugoslavia, because all methods used so far have failed.

'The Soviet leaders, the main organisers of this trial, are employing the well-known methods of accusing victims of their pressure precisely of those intentions they themselves entertain against their victims. Yugoslavia is accused in Sofia of threatening the independence of Bulgaria and other neighbouring states, while it is common knowledge that it is precisely the U.S.S.R. which for almost two years has been endeavouring to subject Yugoslavia to its control by flagrant means.

'Another aim of the Sofia trial is to place Bulgaria in an even more unequal position in relation to the Soviet Union, to subordinate the Bulgarian Government completely to the NKVD, to suppress the voices of those Bulgarian Communists and patriots who are fighting for

equal relations between Bulgaria and the U.S.S.R., to find justification for the difficult economic situation prevailing in Bulgaria. •

‘Through their pressure, the Soviet leaders have prevented the construction of heavy industry, thus holding the country on the level of an agrarian land, as a source of material for Soviet industry, or, as the Bulgarians themselves put it, keeping it as a “vegetable-producing land”.

‘The U.S.S.R. harboured similar designs against Yugoslavia, but we could not agree with such undemocratic intentions.

‘The Sofia trial furthermore is aimed at intimidating all Communists and patriots in other countries and especially in East European countries, who advocate the establishment of equal relations between their parties, that is to say, between their countries and the U.S.S.R.

‘The Kostov trial is only one in a series of similar trials to be held in East European countries. This reveals the deep crisis provoked in those countries by gross interference by the U.S.S.R. in the internal affairs of other states.

‘Traicho Kostov, the main defendant at the Sofia trial, known as an enemy of Yugoslavia both during and after the war, was the first to sign the Cominform resolution and he was its main propagandist in Bulgaria. The Yugoslav Press at the beginning of this year published facts showing that Kostov had long ago been a police spy. The Bulgarian Government denied this most energetically.

‘Kostov, who during the war sold himself to Tsar Boris, now serves as the blind tool of the NKVD in slandering Yugoslavia, in justifying the Soviet Union’s aggressive designs against Yugoslavia, in accusing hun-

dreds of Bulgarian Communists and patriots who are fighting for equal relations between the U.S.S.R. and Bulgaria.

‘The special aim of the Sofia trial is to conceal the profound sympathies which Dimitrov felt for the New Yugoslavia and her struggle for equal relations with U.S.S.R. It was to this end that the monstrous charge that Yugoslavia contemplated murdering Dimitrov was fabricated.

‘We wish to emphasise the fact that the strained relations between the Bulgarian Government and Yugoslavia and the mass arrests of Communists in Bulgaria started only after Dimitrov had been taken to Moscow, where after a period of several months he finally died.

‘The methods used at the Sofia trial show a complete lack of imagination on the part of the organisers of the trial. It is nothing but a replica of the Budapest trial. Instead of Rajk, Kostov; instead of Lazar Brankov, we have another former Yugoslav employee, Hazi Panzov, with all the usual confessions learnt by heart, etc. The indictment is full of fantastic and contradictory fabrications.’

CHAPTER XV

Yugoslavia's Role in UNO

YUGOSLAVIA took the dispute with Russia to UNO in September 1949. Edward Kardelj, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, publicly arraigned Russia for the first time before the bar of world opinion and exposed the true relationship between Moscow and her satellites, as well as between Moscow and Yugoslavia.

The development of postwar Russian Communism was traced clearly and the Yugoslav Foreign Minister at the same time fired the first shots in a campaign to bring an end to the cold war.

It is not without a certain amount of significance that the United States Government ten days later announced that a conference would be held in London of American envoys from the Iron Curtain countries, to discuss ways and means to end the cold war.

The Yugoslav Foreign Minister was warmly applauded for his forthright speech, in which he said: 'I feel that it is first of all necessary to stress that the discrepancy between words and deeds in present-day international relationship has assumed alarming proportions, which finds expression in this house, too. There is no doubt that the bulk of the outstanding international questions appears here before us in a greatly altered form.

'On the one hand, it is certainly true that the democratic consciousness of mankind has advanced to such a degree during the past decades, and especially after the trying school of two world wars, that today it is very difficult openly to defend, for instance, the quality of relationships among peoples, the colonial system, im-

perialist expansionism, the right of big powers to impose their will upon the smaller and weaker; etc. The democratic outlook of ordinary working people has become a strong factor, regardless of their party affiliation.

‘On the other hand, we all know that this does not mean that what democratic public opinion condemns has ceased to exist in practice. No, it continues to be implemented, but it is cloaked with propagandistic artifice. The enslavement of other peoples, for example, has been formally branded as a crime, but it continues to be pursued today with the broad application of various political and economic means.

‘Equality of relationships among sovereign countries is formally recognised, but some formal advocates of “equality and sovereignty” are hardly concerned about this equality when their relations with other countries are in question. Furthermore, a very broad application has been given, for example, to the extremely dangerous tactics of threatening with war supposedly in order to defend peace.

‘And finally, at a moment when there is most talk about the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other countries, this opinion, in practice, has become the main weapon of the international policy of Great Powers and the chief source of danger of new wars. But all these facts are persistently concealed from public opinion, while propaganda presents them in a “different light”.

‘Among some people there is an obvious tendency to turn UNO as much as possible into a platform for propaganda of this type. The question is posed simply in the following way: We either compete here with speeches about peace for their propaganda effect, or we make them in order really to do something for peace.

And this means that, if we indeed consider UNO to be an important and indispensable instrument of peace and international co-operation, we must, in this house, too, fight first of all against the tendency "to solve" current problems by seeking propaganda effects and by competing in the use of democratic phrases; in other words, we must combat the discrepancy between words and deeds and fight so that international problems might be discussed in this house according to their real merit.

'We are unceasingly faced with the question: Can states with different social systems live alongside each other and co-operate peacefully, securing a firm peace among the peoples?

'There is no doubt that such co-operation is possible and necessary, because if there is to be peace, we must ensure peace in the concrete conditions of the present-day world, that is, in conditions of the existence of states with differing social systems. Differences in social systems in themselves naturally do not constitute a source of war danger, if we abide by the principle of not interfering in the internal affairs of other states.

'Several days ago we heard here the Chinese delegate, who called for a veritable crusade against Communism, this being actually reduced to war against the Soviet Union. It goes without saying that one cannot raise such calls and still talk about peace in the world. We consider that this question in essence boils down to the following: If we start from the viewpoint that every people has the right to self-determination and to its own way of life in its own state, then it is obvious that peace-loving co-operation is fully possible among states with differing social systems. If, however, we abandon this principle, then the danger for peace is unquestionable,

not only among states with differing social systems, but also when the issue is the relationships among states of the same social system.

'The danger of war, therefore, does not threaten from differences in social orders, but from imperialistic and anti-democratic tendencies in international relationships, from violation of the principle of equality among states and peoples, from economic exploitation of other peoples, from interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the like.

'It is for this very reason that, in our era, endeavours to consolidate peace must be linked with unflagging and unceasing struggle for equality of relationships among peoples and states, for consolidation of the independence of small states, for the creation of economic and other conditions for their independence and for the removal of the numerous forms of discrimination and economic and political pressure in international relationships. Only in this way can real conditions for truly equal international co-operation be created. These questions are actually the touchstone of the sincerity of peace-loving words and declarations.

'One cannot threaten smaller or weaker countries, violate their right independently to arrange their own way of life, exploit them economically, or enslave them and yet speak about peace. One cannot speak of the obsolescence of principle of equality of sovereignty, of the need for a world government or a world state, which would legalise the economic and political world hegemony of this or that Big Power and yet allege that all this goes to ensure peace. One cannot shower a government with all kinds of threats if this government requests more democracy and equality in relationships among states and yet speak about non-interference

in the internal affairs of other countries and against the use of war threats as a means to solve international disputes.

'The Yugoslav delegation considers that such manifestations constitute a grave danger and a potential source of war.'

Mr. Kardelj went on: 'For a year and a half, my country has been faced with a new problem—the problem of defending her national independence and integrity. I refer to the dispute between the Soviet Government and the Yugoslav Government. When I speak of the discrepancy between words and deeds, I cannot omit to refer to the anti-democratic practice of the Soviet Government towards Yugoslavia, which is of late being intensely discussed in the world Press.

'The concrete acts of the U.S.S.R. towards Yugoslavia lead to confirmation of the fact that the Soviet Government is not always an interpreter of the contemporary aspirations of partisans of peace and democracy. We appreciate the positive and progressive views of the Soviet Government for peace and peace-loving co-operation among the peoples, to which we have given and will give our support; yet we cannot but establish the deep discrepancy between words and deeds on its part in a number of questions, which has especially found expression in the relationships of the U.S.S.R. towards Yugoslavia.

'One cannot speak of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, yet at the same time maintain such a stand as that maintained today by the Soviet Government towards the Government of an independent country such as Yugoslavia. One cannot speak of love of peace, yet at the same time shower Yugoslavia with such threats as is being done by the Soviet Government.

'All this assumes a special significance when taking into consideration that it maintains such an attitude towards a country which, as the Soviet Government and the entire world know, does not enjoy the support of any blocs, that it has not concluded any secret pacts or committed itself to any military obligations with any enemies of the U.S.S.R. Obviously for this reason, the Soviet Government considers that it can employ such unusual "diplomatic" methods towards it as are absolutely unknown in history and the discovery of which certainly does not do honour to the Soviet Government.'

Mr. Kardelj's indictment of Soviet Russia grew more and more biting. He went on: 'As always in similar cases in history, the real ideological and material substance of the dispute is being unveiled to the accompaniment of an unparalleled witch-hunt of slander and lies, a witch-hunt of which it is hard to find an example in history.'

'Pressure is being brought to bear on our country with all possible means to subjugate it to alien hegemonistic tendencies. Economic pressure is being organised which has developed almost to a complete economic blockade, against Yugoslavia by East European countries, and then attempts are made, with long and unaccustomed notes and open threats, to influence people with weak nerves in our country; all this is supplemented with demonstrative troop movements and countless frontier incidents. It is sufficient to mention that in the period from July 1st, 1948, to September 1st this year alone, there have been 219 armed incidents provoked by Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, and 69 violations of our airspace.'

Yugoslavia's attitude towards UNO was defined by

Marshal Tito in two speeches in October 1949. One he made to a large crowd in the village of Stolice in Serbia, where, eight years before, the first conference of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Headquarters of the Partisan Units was held. At this conference, decisions were taken to develop the people's revolt into a general people's war and form a people's regular army.

This is what he had to say about UNO at Stolice: 'We shall act there correctly and consistently and will not for any reason hush up incorrect acts, no matter whose they may be.

'We are a small country, but we shall strictly adhere to our foreign policy. We shall strictly take care that our policy should comply with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and be based on the principles of Socialism; to say to the big ones—and this is a case of the big ones—to West and East, that there can be no trading with the fate of small peoples, nor talk of their fate, without asking whether they are in accord with the talks which are being conducted about them or not. We are an adult people. Our people have through the centuries proved themselves capable of governing themselves and we will never allow anyone to impose their rule on us.'

The other speech was to 600 generals and officers after the Yugoslav Army manoeuvres south of Belgrade. Speaking of the Soviet Union, he said: 'They hoped that we would cringe on the benches of the United Nations and be still, while they struck us over here with whips, thongs and slaps. Why should we be silent? We did not speak because of the Western reactionaries, for they are no better, but because that was the only right thing to do. It is our duty to say that they say one thing while

doing differently towards us. We have 'the right to defend our country and we must not permit anyone to isolate our people, lest it fall into even greater difficulties.

'We will not allow it. We shall in the future, too, step forward in such a principled manner at all international conferences and forums. If the Soviet Union is right somewhere, we shall stand by it. If it is not right and its stand is hypocritical, we shall call that stand by its right name.

'I tell you, officers and generals, if we ourselves are not capable of compelling them to respect fundamentals, moral principles, then we must speak up and prove before the entire world that they do one thing and say another. That is the essence of our struggle. We must fight for every progressive person in the world, lest he believe that we are traitors to the working class and Marxism-Leninism. The entire progressive world must know of our gigantic, heroic struggle for victory, truth and justice in the world. It pays, Comrades, to live for this and it pays to die for this, too, if necessary.'

From these speeches it will be seen that Tito has cast Yugoslavia for the role of Chief Justice and Arbiter in UNO, forming part of no bloc, but pursuing an independent line and voting according to where he thinks Socialist justice and Yugoslavia's interests lie.

Yugoslavia put forward her candidature independently for the seat on the Security Council to be vacated by the Ukraine, in defiance of Russia's sponsorship of Czechoslovakia for the vacant seat.

The reasons for this step were given by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Edward Kardelj, in an interview with the head of the United Nations bureau of the *New York Times*, Thomas Hamilton.

Mr. Kardelj said: 'If Yugoslavia is elected to the Security Council, she will not be guided in her work purely by her own interests, but by the interests of world peace and security. As far as voting is concerned, Yugoslavia will vote independently, according to her own convictions and in the spirit of the said principles.

'Yugoslavia has put up her candidature for the Security Council both for national and general reasons. She considers that with her role in the past war and consistent struggle for peace and real independence and co-operation after the war, she deserves, as an independent country, to be elected.

'Besides, for formal geographic-regional reasons, too, by order of participation of the various countries in the Security Council, Yugoslavia is entitled to this.

'If the matter were taken differently, it would mean that we could never aspire to this right. These are national reasons. The general reasons for our candidature are: our conviction that Yugoslavia's participation in the Security Council can only contribute to the constructive work and role of UNO and its further consolidation on the basis of the Charter.'

The Security Council has the task of maintaining law and order throughout the world and is composed of the permanent representatives of the five major powers—Great Britain, the United States of America, Russia, France and China, plus six non-permanent members elected for two years. The permanent members enjoy the right of veto. The non-permanent members do not.

Article 23 of the United Nations Charter lays down the terms under which the non-permanent members are elected. It reads: 'The General Assembly shall elect six other members of the Security Council, due regard being specially paid in the first instance to the contribution

of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organisation and also to equitable geographical distribution.'

Under this article, Yugoslavia has as much right as any other country to seek election to the Security Council. However, from the first meeting of UNO at San Francisco, there has been a 'gentleman's agreement' between the Big Powers, whereby spheres of interest were recognised. This has meant that Soviet Russia has voted for candidates of the U.S.A. in the Western Hemisphere and British candidates for the Commonwealth region. In return, Britain and the United States have accepted Russian candidates for Eastern Europe.

The United States announced before the meeting of the General Assembly that she would vote for Yugoslavia. Great Britain announced that she would vote for Czechoslovakia, thus respecting the 'gentleman's agreement'.

The importance which Russia attached to Yugoslavia's candidature was indicated by the lengths to which the Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei Vyshinsky, went to prevent Yugoslavia's election.

He held a Press conference before the meeting of the General Assembly and described Yugoslavia's candidature as 'the result of a behind-the-scenes bargain between the U.S.A. and certain other delegations who are supporting the U.S.A. delegation on the one hand and the Yugoslav delegation on the other hand'.

He added: 'This group of delegations does not want to take into consideration the fact that the countries belonging to the region of Eastern Europe have by agreement among themselves nominated Czechoslovakia and not Yugoslavia.'

Mr. Vyshinsky went on: 'The plan is to weaken by this manoeuvre the position of the U.S.S.R. in the Security Council.'

He accused 'the Anglo-American bloc' of 'the intention of moving further along the path of deepening the split and reducing even the minimum degree of agreement in the work of the United Nations'.

He went on: 'Such a step cannot be regarded otherwise than as a challenge flung to the countries of People's Democracy and to the Soviet Union. . . . Such machinations undoubtedly undermine the basis of the United Nations Organisation and, first of all, the Security Council.'

He concluded his tirade: 'It should be borne in mind that an election of the non-permanent members, carried out with such flagrant violations of the Charter and of the established tradition, could not be recognised as either lawful or just. That would be the attitude of the Soviet Delegation to this election, unless the majority of the General Assembly rebuffs the sinister underhand designs of the enemies of unity and co-operation in the United Nations Organisation and takes steps to prevent such a flagrant violation of the Charter. The Soviet Union never has and never will reconcile itself to violations of the Charter, particularly those violations which undermine the very basis of the United Nations Organisations.'

This was interpreted by some as meaning that Russia would walk out of UNO if Yugoslavia were elected to the vacant seat on the Security Council.

Mr. Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, replied to Mr. Vyshinsky at his Press conference in Washington the next day. He said: 'There is nothing illegal in Yugoslavia putting herself forward as a candidate and being

elected if she has enough votes to be elected.

'The Charter provides in referring to the qualifications of the non-permanent members that they should be judged by their contribution toward the capacity of the Security Council to maintain peace and to carry out the other purposes of the Charter and with due regard for geographical considerations.

'Geographically Yugoslavia is an Eastern European State. She is a Slav State. She is a Communist State. The only thing that she lacks at the present time apparently is complete domination by the Kremlin, which is not referred to in the Charter or any other agreement as a necessary qualification.

'I don't see that there is any great issue about this. There are two candidates. Each country is supposed to exercise its sound judgment about it. Mr. Vyshinsky was quite unfair to the British, who are supporting Czechoslovakia, so they got spanked quite undeservedly. People can have different views about it. It is not a great world-shattering event here. Our point of view is clear and has not been changed by this outburst.'

Questioned about the 'gentleman's agreement', Mr. Acheson said that he thought Mr. Vyshinsky implied that there was an understanding that he should be able to name one person for the Security Council, adding, 'which is an agreement I never heard of'.

Mr. Acheson agreed that there was a practice whereby certain regions selected the country to sit on the Security Council. He added: 'I think in general there has been that practice. I don't think there is any agreement that the practice should continue and it certainly was never a practice that any one member of the group should dictate who the candidate should be.'

The Yugoslav Delegation to UNO replied to Mr.

Vyshinsky's statement with a declaration in which it was pointed out that the Soviet Delegation 'holds the following views:

'Firstly, that an independent country in Eastern Europe which does not agree to subordinate its policy to the Soviet Government—Yugoslavia in this case—cannot be elected to the Security Council, and secondly that, the United Nations should tacitly condone Soviet pressure against Yugoslavia—an independent and sovereign country.

'Furthermore, from the Soviet statement, it follows that elections in the United Nations should be reduced to a mere formality and that the members of the United Nations should bow in advance to the demand of a great power. Thus, were the Soviet point of view to be adopted, the United Nations would in fact be split into blocs and would lose the character of an important factor in the current struggle for the maintenance of peace and security in the world and the development of peaceful international co-operation.

'The construction placed on the principle of geographical distribution by Mr. Vyshinsky is at complete variance with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. If the Soviet point of view were to be adopted, it would mean that Yugoslavia would have no right whatsoever to place her candidature for the Security Council until the Soviet Government's approval was obtained.

'The acceptance of such a point of view would, of course, divide the United Nations into first-rate and second-rate countries; it would render equal relations between states impossible and would above all preclude the possibility of states freely to determine their own attitudes, while, on the other hand, it would further the

tendency of dividing the world into spheres of influence. In the final analysis, the adoption of such an attitude would mean the extension of the right of veto to the candidature of one country or another to the Security Council.

'All this derives a particular significance from the fact that Yugoslavia would most probably have been elected this year normally and without difficulty to the Security Council had she not been in conflict with the Government of the U.S.S.R.—through no fault of her own, but only because she defended the principle of equality and democracy in the relations between states and peoples.

'Considered in this light, the adoption of the Soviet point of view would mean the acceptance of the principle that no small country in conflict with a great power can be elected to the Security Council. It would mean, furthermore, that the United Nations automatically supports the policy of pressure against smaller countries.

'It follows from the above, that Yugoslavia's election to the Security Council at this time, far from undermining the unity of the United Nations or impairing the prospects of a more peaceful atmosphere in the world, would, on the contrary, enhance the moral authority of the United Nations, contribute to prevent a policy of pressure and threats in the relations between countries and strengthen the feeling of security for all peoples.

'In placing its candidature for the Security Council, the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was solely guided by the desire to remain true to its struggle for the independence of its country, for equal relations among states, for the right of every people to organise its life without interference from out-

side, for the strengthening of international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

'The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia will be guided by these principles in the Security Council if she is elected.'

On 20th October 1949, the General Assembly of the United Nations voted for candidates for three non-permanent seats on the Security Council which were due to fall vacant on 31st December.

India and Ecuador were elected in place of Canada and Argentina respectively on the first ballot, but Yugoslavia only secured 37 votes against Czechoslovakia's 20, which did not give Yugoslavia the necessary two-thirds majority. There were 58 valid votes and clearly one country had abstained.

A second ballot was taken and Yugoslavia was elected to the seat held by the Ukraine by 39 votes to Czechoslovakia's 19.

The United States voted for Yugoslavia. Great Britain, still respecting the 'gentleman's agreement' to respect spheres of influence, voted for Russia's candidate Czechoslovakia through both ballots.

Mr. Vyshinsky did not let the election go through without creating a scene. Immediately after the President, General Carlos P. Romulo, had stated what the election was about, Mr. Vyshinsky jumped up to a point of order and proceeded to describe the Yugoslav declaration in reply to Mr. Vyshinsky's Press conference as 'distorted and slanderous'.

He went on: 'The Soviet Union delegation insists on one thing and one thing alone, that the gentleman's agreement must prevail for gentlemen.'

'It cannot exist for those who are deprived of this elementary concept, which is binding on every decent

Member of the United Nations and upon every decent human being.'

He was ruled out of order and the vote was taken.

But Mr. Vyshinsky, who was a very angry man, jumped up after the vote and addressed the Assembly on an explanation of the vote. He said: 'The election has entailed a violation of a firm tradition, according to which expiring memberships on the Security Council are replaced by countries belonging to the same geographical region. These two principles have always been strictly adhered to thus far in the election of non-permanent members to the Security Council. These two principles have now been flagrantly violated.

'It is well known that the delegations of the five countries of Eastern Europe have unanimously advanced the candidature of Czechoslovakia. The candidature of Yugoslavia was not advanced by any one of these countries.'

When he got on to the theme of the 'behind-the-scenes plot' he was called to order by the President, but Mr. Vyshinsky ignored him and went on with his tirade. The President therefore announced that as his call to order was not respected, he would ask the interpretation system, as soon as his gavel was banged, to stop the interpretations.

This ended the scene and the election of Yugoslavia to the Security Council.

Although it was announced that Great Britain would vote for Czechoslovakia, there was no official explanation of Britain's attitude during the UNO session.

However, on 24th November 1949, Mr. Keeling, the Conservative Member for Twickenham, asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he would give particulars of the convention which made it necessary

for the United Kingdom to vote for the election of Czechoslovakia to the Security Council.

Mr. Mayhew, Under-Secretary, Foreign Affairs, replied: The convention is in the nature of a working arrangement which has developed from the practice of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Under this arrangement, one of the six non-permanent seats on the Security Council has always gone to the British Commonwealth, one to Western Europe, two to Latin America, one to the Middle East, and one to Eastern Europe. It has also come to be generally accepted that the candidate supported by these groups of nations should receive general support.'

Mr. Keeling asked whether the Government would consider terminating or amending the convention, which, he understood, was made several years ago, under very different conditions.

Mr. Mayhew replied: 'There was no specific time when the convention was made. It is a working arrangement which has grown up. I think there are some advantages in this working arrangement by which a member of the British Commonwealth has always been a non-permanent member of the Security Council. It has its advantages; it prevents bitterness and deadlock sometimes, in these elections.'

In answer to further questions, Mr. Mayhew said that anyone suggesting that His Majesty's Government were condoning the regime in Czechoslovakia by the action they were taking was wilfully misunderstanding their position.

Thus Tito scored his greatest triumph of the cold war in the face of threats by the Russian Foreign Minister and a display of violently bad temper at the session itself.

Russia did not walk out of UNO when the result of the ballot was made known.

The seat which Yugoslavia now holds on the Security Council is a non-permanent one, which means that it is held for two years.

Yugoslavia has no veto, a privilege which is enjoyed only by the permanent members of the Security Council, the United States, Great Britain, China, Russia and France.

But the election of Yugoslavia to the Security Council at a time when Tito and Stalin are still locked in the most vituperative of cold wars has given Tito additional prestige and authority inside Yugoslavia, in the Balkans and the world at large, on top of that which he has won for himself in his single-handed battle with the Thirteen Men in the Kremlin.

It will give Yugoslavia added authority in the councils of UNO and in the event of her conflict with Russia becoming more aggravated, her position on the Security Council, even as a non-permanent member, will enable her to present her case with greater effectiveness.

But, if Tito should appeal to UNO to take action on the grounds that Russia's behaviour constitutes a threat to peace or a breach of peace, and I have no doubt that he will as soon as he has reason to believe that Russia is going to take or has started to take action which means war, then the thorny problem of the veto would arise.

Linked with this is the question of the recognition of Communist China and her position in UNO. Nationalist China, that is, the China ruled by Chiang Kai Shek, is a permanent Member of the Security Council and as such enjoys the power of veto.

The Chinese Communists are bringing all the pressure

they can to secure speedy recognition by the outside world of their regime. In the event of their recognition, which seems likely, Communist China would presumably take over the permanent seat on the Security Council and with it, the right of veto. This would enable China to use the veto when and where Russia was barred from so doing by the Charter.

Under paragraph three of Article 27 of the Charter, a Member of the Security Council who is a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting on measures for the pacific settlement of disputes. There is, however, nothing in the Charter to prevent that same Member of the Security Council, who is a party to a dispute, vetoing sanctions against himself.

If there should be on the Security Council a permanent Member who is an ally to that party to the dispute or of the same ideological persuasion, that ally can veto both the investigation, discussion and proposals for the peaceful settlement of, the dispute. That ally can also veto any direct action that the Security Council might decide to take in the face of the veto of the party in question.

Thus the importance to Russia of Communist China being recognised as the legal government of China becomes at once evident. Communist China, as a permanent Member of the Security Council, could veto peaceful measures for the settlement of the dispute between Russia and Yugoslavia. In addition, Communist China could also veto any sanctions that might be decided upon by the Security Council in the teeth of the Russian veto. Then the Security Council would be confronted with the situation of a double veto against any United Nations sanctions.

Such action would completely nullify the sweeping

powers granted the Security Council, under the terms of the Charter, for the maintenance of peace.

For where peaceful measures for the solution of disputes are unsuccessful, the Security Council is empowered under Article 39 to 'determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression' and Articles 41 and 42 specify the steps that the Security Council is empowered to take.

Article 41 lays down that they may include 'complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio and other means of communication and the severance of diplomatic relations.

Should these steps prove inadequate, Article 42 empowers the Security Council 'to take such action by air, sea or land forces, as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade and other operations by air, sea or land forces of Members of the United Nations.'

How are such steps to be implemented? Under Article 43 of the Charter, all Members of the United Nations, 'in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security'.

All these powers, however, would be brought to naught by China's veto and Russia would be able to pursue whatever course she considered fit to bring Tito to heel, without UNO, under the terms of the Charter, being able to do anything to stop her.

There would remain, of course, the Atlantic Pact, as a deterrent to Russian warlike action, but the Atlantic Pact, as it stands at present, does not extend its influence to the Balkans, traditional powder keg of Europe.

In such a situation, the only course left open to Yugoslavia in the event of attack would be to defend herself and seek allies to help her.

CHAPTER XVI

This Man Tito

BUT who is this man Tito, who has inflicted a series of crushing diplomatic and propaganda defeats on Stalin and Soviet Russia singlehanded and successfully defied the Kremlin and the Cominform for nearly two years?

He is Europe's mystery man dictator. Very little is known about his early life. There is no official biography of him. Even the name by which he is known throughout the world is not his own. It is a nickname which he started to use during the period when he was engaged in underground conspiratorial work to enable him to evade the police.

His real name is Josip Broz, but his nickname has become so much part and parcel of the man that it appears in the official records along with his real name. Thus, in the Yugoslav Communist Party membership roll, he figures as Josip Broz-Tito.

Physically, he is an impressive figure of a man, though only about five feet five inches in height, with a strong healthy physique, iron-grey wavy hair, brushed back from the forehead without parting, broad shoulders and a barrel-like chest. There is a rosy glow of health about Tito which comes from plenty of good food and wine.

Tito carries himself well and dresses with taste. When he goes on tour or on an official visit, he wears the imposing uniform of Marshal, with its peaked hat, which gives him a strong resemblance to Goering. He is, however, in his marshal's uniform, a better-proportioned and more impressive man than Goering was.

He does not, however, always wear uniform, although

that is the way in which he is most frequently photographed. He attends Parliament sessions in a well-cut lounge suit, usually of grey, showing the white cuffs of his spotlessly laundered shirt.

He is an animal-lover and owns a huge Alsatian named Tiger, which always accompanies him when he is on holiday, or resting at Bled or on the Island of Brioni, his two favourite resorts. He is divorced and married again and has one son by each wife.

Born in Kumrovac, in Croatia, in 1892, of peasant stock, Joseph Broz became a locksmith. He served in the Austro-Hungarian Army in the first World War, deserted and fled to Russia, but returned to Yugoslavia some years after the revolution.

He joined the Communist Party in 1920 and secretly organised the Metalworkers' Union, as the Communist Party was banned in Yugoslavia. He adopted the pseudonym of Tito to carry on his work without interference from the police, but was arrested in 1930 and sentenced to four years imprisonment for 'conspiracy'.

After his release in 1934, he went to Vienna and Moscow and later, in 1936, after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, to Paris, where he helped recruit Yugoslavs for the International Brigades to fight alongside the Spanish Republican forces.

Tito has successfully defied two dictators, Hitler and Stalin; Hitler on the battlefield and Stalin the diplomatic and propaganda field. Perhaps, who knows, he may have to defy him on the battlefield.

When the people of Yugoslavia rose in their wrath and revolted against the Tsvetkovich-Marcovich Agreement with Germany, and removed the Regent Prince Paul and the Government from power, Tito was living in Zagreb.

At first, the brunt of the fighting was borne by Draza

Mihailovich and his chetniks, the backbone of which were soldiers from the Yugoslav Army. But, in addition to the regular army, the people of Yugoslavia rose spontaneously in revolt against the Germans.

They were disorganised and unco-ordinated, but they fought, and gradually the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which had an efficient working organisation, took over control of the partisans, who came from all walks of life and all political parties.

Both Mihailovich and the partisans were dependent to a large extent on the outside world for supplies. The partisans had few weapons, but armed themselves with what they captured from the enemy.

As it became clear that the partisans were fighting more effectively against the Germans, the Italians, the Hungarians and the Bulgars than the chetniks, Britain's aid was switched to Tito, who had become Commander-in-Chief of the Partisan Army.

Tito was wounded in the War of National Liberation. In 1943, the Germans staged their fifth offensive aimed at completely liquidating the partisans and capturing their headquarters command. They very nearly succeeded. But Tito and his staff, with its protective divisions, escaped through the ring which was closing in on them, although not before Tito was wounded. Here Tito's strong physique and powers of resistance enabled him to get away and keep marching through the mountains into Bosnia.

In the same year, Tito was elected Marshal of Yugoslavia and President of the National Liberation Committee.

After the War of National Liberation was over, Tito found himself confronted with the huge task of governing and reconstructing a devastated country. He pro-

ceeded gradually to tighten his grip on the reins of power. Thus, the first governments were not wholly Communist, but gradually non-Communists were replaced by Communists, particularly in the principal Cabinet posts.

The last of the key posts to be taken over by the Communists was that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This portfolio was held by Stanoye Simich, a Republican, who presided over the opening session of the Danubian Conference.

In the Cabinet shake-up of September 1949, Simich was replaced by one of Tito's most trusted comrades-in-arms, Edward Kardelj, who was one of the eight members of the Supreme Military Council during the War of National Liberation and who deputised for Tito when the latter went to Poland to sign the treaty of alliance and mutual collaboration.

Tito's political position is very strong. He now has a complete grip on the country. He personally controls the reins of power. He is, in addition to being Premier and Minister of National Defence, Secretary-General of the Yugoslav Communist Party, in which capacity he presides over meetings of the Politburo. He thus enjoys a position similar to Stalin.

He was elected Secretary-General by 2,318 votes out of 2,344 on 28th July 1948. The day before, he was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

He created the Yugoslav Army, which is now about 600,000 strong, an unusually strong army for a country with a population of 15 millions, and its officers get preferential treatment. The army is, not unnaturally, loyal to him.

Furthermore, Tito has surrounded himself with men

who joined the Communist Party about the same time, who are bound together by bonds of comradeship forged in years of underground struggle and persecution, followed by comradeship-in-arms during the War of National Liberation.

Edward Kardelj, the Foreign Minister and first vice-premier, joined the Communist Youth Movement at the age of sixteen.

Alexander Rankovich, Minister of Interior and second vice-premier, created and controls the secret police. He joined the Communist Youth Movement at the age of seventeen.

Dr. Blagoje Neshkovich, President of the Central Control Commission and third vice-premier, joined the Communist Youth Movement at the age of nineteen.

Milovan Djilas, Minister without Portfolio and the anonymous author of most of Yugoslavia's replies and counterblasts to the Russian and Cominform campaign, joined the Communist Party at the age of twenty-two.

This 'Big Four' has come under fire from Moscow and the Cominform as 'the Tito Group'.

Tito is an all-powerful dictator in a closely-knit, peasant country, which has lived through the war years in an atmosphere of close conspiracy, trusting no one until he or she had proved a friend.

Germans, Italians, Hungarians and Bulgars were killing and burning and torturing Yugoslavs, making it a question of life and death that no trust should be placed in a stranger until he had proved himself worthy.

Much of this spirit of all alone in the world has been carried into the post-war period. One of the effects of the Cominform dispute may very well be to bring Yugoslavia out of her shell, out of her self-imposed isolationism. It already has done to a certain extent.

Opposition to Tito personally and to the Communist regime as a regime, exists in Yugoslavia, but it is not organised or armed. The secret police is very efficient.

Tito's only possible rival might be Alexander Rankovich, whose secret police captured Mihailovich. Rankovich, however, is reputed to be loyal and is a quiet and unassuming man, who does not court publicity or desire the limelight.

If personal ambition should override the spirit of comradeship which links the 'Big Four' and in the unlikely event of a struggle for power between Tito and Rankovich, the secret police could do little against the Army.

So far, by inflicting a series of crushing diplomatic defeats on Soviet Russia, Tito has captured the moral leadership of the Communist countries. By indicting Soviet Russia before UNO and the world, he has enlisted the support of the United States.

For nearly two years he has questioned Moscow's right to dictate the way in which Yugoslavia shall be run and suffered no penalty, despite every measure short of war taken against her by not only Moscow, but by the satellite countries, banded together in the Cominform.

He is the first Communist leader openly and successfully to break with Moscow. He has asked for a loan and for arms from the West. He has announced his intention of selling all the raw materials he can to the West.

This attitude adopted by Tito, which has made him the champion and arch-priest of National Communism, has caused many Communists throughout the world, who have up to now slavishly followed the writ from Moscow, without question, to ask themselves whether

they have not been duped by a master confidence trickster in the Kremlin.

They are beginning to ask whether their countries would not be better off if they went their own way.

The future of Stalin-Communism depends on the outcome of the struggle between Tito and the Kremlin and the Cominform. By his defiance, Tito has thrown an enormous monkey wrench into the machine that Moscow was beginning to build out of the satellite countries.

Principal business at Cominform meetings is now what to do about Tito, instead of reconstruction and interchange of goods and exports.

The whole Marxist doctrine, as interpreted by the Sage in the Kremlin, has been challenged and the challenger is still governing and still challenging defiantly, nearly two years after the first disciplinary action was taken against him.

Communism is a dictatorship which is much more dangerous than German National-Socialism, because it is more intelligent, more insidious, more cunning and more subtle in its method of operation. In addition, it has been at work for many more years.

The discipline of the Communist Party is strict. Its members have been drilled for years in party discipline. They have been banded together for years in underground conspiracy. They have suffered imprisonment and ill-treatment at the hands of the police and are linked by this common bond of suffering. They have experienced exile for their political views. Many have lived in Moscow for years and received their training there.

Tito has been trained in Moscow. Therefore, for a leading Communist like him to take up a questioning and defiant attitude towards Stalin is a sign that even in

the heart of the 'well-drilled Communist, taught over a period of years to accept the doctrine of St. Marx as gospel, there are nationalist stirrings.

To be a Communist, you have to be a fanatic; you have to abdicate the right to think for yourself. Your thinking is done for you by the Communist Party. You just obey.

Tito has reassumed his right to think for himself and for Yugoslavia. He has shown that there is another type of Communism, which leaves room for patriotism. He has shown himself to be a Yugoslav first and a Communist after, which, in itself, is a breach of one of the fundamental principles of Stalin-Communism. It is also a breach of rigid party discipline.

How seriously Russia regards Tito's rebellion is indicated by the drastic steps taken to suppress manifestations of Titoism in the Cominform countries.

Thus, the trial of Laszlo Rajk, formerly Minister of Interior and then Foreign Minister in Hungary, had the dual purpose of removing a leading Communist who was not sufficiently subservient to Moscow and putting Tito on trial.

The trial of Traicho Kostov, formerly deputy Premier of Bulgaria, served the same purpose. There will be other trials of Communists who put their country before their Communism and among them will probably be Gomulka, formerly Secretary-General of the Polish Communist Party, who was a very early rebel and was merely removed from office for his disagreement with the official Cominform and Kremlin line.

But what can Russia do to put an end to Tito's defiance and so check the spread of National Communism in the Cominform countries?

Two alternatives are discussed in Belgrade. One is to

organise Tito's assassination. The other is to invade Yugoslavia and put a puppet in control. Neither is easy.

Tito's defiance of Stalin has rallied behind him many who were previously opposed to him on personal and political grounds. They now take the attitude 'He's a man and a good Yugoslav, even though he is a Communist'. His stand for Yugoslav independence has thus reduced the number of Yugoslavs who might previously have been willing to run the risk of attempting to assassinate him.

He has an élite bodyguard who would defend him to the last. The secret police, whose task it is to make sure that any would-be assassins are captured before their plot can be carried to fruition, are efficient.

The greatest danger of assassination could come from the agents-provocateurs who are crossing the frontier from the neighbouring Cominform countries with the mission of stirring up trouble. They are constantly being rounded up by the secret police.

Invasion of Yugoslavia is possible by Russian troops passing through the satellite countries which border on Yugoslavia or by satellite troops acting as police under Russian or Cominform orders. The obvious point of entry into Yugoslavia would be over the plains of Hungary.

The Yugoslavs would fight an invasion tooth and nail, whether Russian or Cominform or both, even if the attack were launched simultaneously from the satellite countries bordering her frontiers, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania.

They fought the Germans, Italians, Hungarians and Bulgars during the war, when they had no organised army. Now they are organised and have an army estimated at about 600,000 strong, created by Tito and

trained in the hard school of guerrilla warfare.

Should the satellite countries close in on Yugoslavia from the four neighbouring points, on orders from Moscow or the Cominform, the Yugoslavs, if overwhelmed by superior numbers, the initial thrust and superior amount of equipment, would withdraw into the mountains and valleys and wage guerrilla war in much the same way as they did during the War of National Liberation.

Their weakness lies in their lack of modern armament, ammunition and planes. During the War of National Liberation, they depended mainly on weapons captured from the enemy.

Later they got a certain amount of material by parachute from Britain and the U.S.A. After the war, they got some war material from Russia. The blockade has cut off these supplies from Russia, as well as supplies from Czechoslovakia, the main arsenal of the satellite countries controlled from Moscow.

For a prolonged war, therefore, the Yugoslavs would have to depend on supplies from the West. To get supplies of clothing, ammunition, war material and equipment through to Yugoslavia is not easy. During World War II, they had to be dropped by parachute or landed by transport plane. The weather and the mountains are all against this system of supply, but it was done. If history repeats itself and the Hungarians and the Bulgars invade, this time supported by Albanians and Rumanians, the same method of supply would have to be employed.

My view is that Russia will attempt to turn Yugoslavia into another Greece and reduce the country to chaos, without an actual declaration of war. Guerrillas will cross over the frontier from the neighbouring countries

and gradually spread death and destruction, sabotaging everything they can, with the object of bringing the country to a standstill. Then invasion would follow 'to restore law and order', but in reality to remove Tito from office and replace him with a puppet.

Such operations by the Russians or the Cominform countries would raise a nice academic point for the West. If Tito appealed to UNO or to the West for help, as he undoubtedly would, what would be the reply? If the reply were in favour of giving military aid, how would this be implemented? Could Russia act swiftly enough to accomplish her purpose before the Security Council could act? Would Yugoslavia become another Spain?

This may seem purely hypothetical, but should Russia take it into her head that Tito's defection represents an immediate threat to her security, what happened in Finland may very well happen in Yugoslavia.

I believe it is in the interests of Great Britain and the United States to see that Tito does not go under as a result of his defiance of the Kremlin. He has thrown off the shackles of Moscow and the Cominform. He has started a rebellion which is spreading and challenged the whole Marxist doctrine as interpreted by Stalin.

Tito's rebellion is the beginning of light in the Communist darkness. It is acting as a beacon as the months go by and Tito grows more and more defiant of the Men in the Kremlin.

If Tito can continue to develop Yugoslavia industrially and agriculturally, which he can only do with help from the West, there is every chance of Titoism spreading and the satellite countries forsaking Moscow and turning more and more to the West.

The more the satellite countries turn to the West for

economic help, the looser is the grip which Moscow holds over them. All Moscow's threats are empty if they cannot be backed by effective economic sanctions or armed force.

Encouragement of Titoism and the spread of Titoism, with the consequent growth of independence, makes it more and more difficult for the Kremlin to weld the Cominform countries into one solid economic and political bloc, taking its orders from Moscow.

If Britain and the United States handle the Russo-Yugoslav dispute skilfully, a situation in which war might become inevitable can be avoided.

If Russia continues to spread her doctrines of Stalin-Communism and through it her own typically Russian influence, hegemony and totalitarian way of life, then, inevitably, a situation will arise in which the freedom-loving powers will have to choose between combating this tidal wave of totalitarianism or watching the world be engulfed by it by degrees.

If the freedom-loving powers win the cold war, then there will be less danger of a shooting war breaking out or becoming inevitable.

The freedom-loving powers have been given an opportunity of taking the initiative in the cold war, which is being so mercilessly waged by Soviet Russia as part of the scheme for the spread of Communism throughout the world.

This opportunity has been presented by an individual, a Communist rebel, who has arisen out of the army of drilled and dragooned totalitarian Communists, to cry halt to the Stalin-Communist tide which surged so swiftly over so much of the map of Europe, not to mention the Far East.

If the voice of this man, Josip Broz-Tito, is stilled, then

a unique opportunity of stemming the Communist tidal wave by peaceful means and seizing the initiative in the cold war will have been lost.

For all those who think like him in the satellite countries will be forced to lie low and Soviet Russia will have tightened her grip even more closely on the economic, political and social fabric of Europe.

But, as long as Tito remains in power, shouting defiance at Stalin and the Kremlin, then those with similar nationalist feelings in the satellite countries will take heart. Those in positions of authority who hold similar opinions will be encouraged to come out into the open and help spread further the doctrine of independence.

Tito's political and geographical position is strong. In addition to his firm hold on Yugoslavia, he controls a vital section of the Danube, which the Russians plan to turn into a waterway for the enrichment of Soviet Russia at the expense of the satellite countries.

Economically, his position is weak, and this is where the freedom-loving powers can simultaneously strike a shrewd blow in the cold war and at the same time prove the superiority of the capitalist system over the Communist system.

Technical and industrial help for Tito would enable him to continue his defiance of the Kremlin and proceed with his Five Year Plan for the industrialisation of Yugoslavia. It would also demonstrate to the people of Yugoslavia that the 'decadent capitalists' can still do a better job than the fanatical Communists and without endless propaganda or elaborate Five Year Plans.

A few British motor-cars bowling along the streets of Belgrade and Zagreb and along the country roads, through the villages and towns, would demonstrate the superiority of British manufactures. British lorries and

British buses would act as better advocates of the British way of life than all the speeches and propaganda leaflets, useful though these are.

British mining equipment and machinery would be an eye-opener to the workers of Yugoslavia, many of whom have been conditioned over the years to accept as gospel all the anti-capitalist propaganda pumped out over the radio and in books and leaflets.

Concrete demonstrations of the superiority of British products would do more to puncture the Communist balloon than all the visits by politicians.

The first step towards making this possible was taken at Christmas 1949, when an Anglo-Yugoslav Trade Agreement was signed in Belgrade by Sir Charles Peake, the British Ambassador, and Milentije Popovich, the Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Trade, twelve months after the Soviet Government had announced that its trade with Yugoslavia for 1949 would be reduced to one-eighth of the volume of trade in 1948.

The agreement, which is for five years, provides for £110 millions' worth of trade each way, or a total of £220 millions over five years, and nearly doubles trade between the two countries. It is the largest trade agreement Yugoslavia has signed with any country, and it is estimated that it will save Britain nearly 20 million dollars.

In it, the Yugoslav Government expresses the intention of spending £30 millions on British-made capital equipment. The United Kingdom Government undertakes to "take whatever steps are open to them in the light of their general export policy to facilitate the placing of Yugoslav orders for capital equipment to this value".

At the same time as the trade agreement, and agreement on compensation was signed.

The negotiations lasted ten months and looked like breaking down on more than one occasion. The principal difficulties were the question of compensation for British property in Yugoslavia, nationalised by the Yugoslav Government, and credits.

The Yugoslavs proved hard bargainers and at one stage it seemed that a barter agreement was the best that could be achieved. The United States, however, is strongly opposed to this type of agreement.

The Yugoslavs were anxious to secure a large cash credit on account of their shortage of foreign exchange.

Agreement was finally reached for payment of £4,500,000 over eight years by the Yugoslav Government in compensation for confiscated British property and the granting of an £8 millions credit for six years by the British Government, bearing interest at the rate of five per cent per annum.

Britain will get from Yugoslavia timber for housing, foodstuffs and metals. The timber products specified in the agreement include sawn softwood, sleepers, pit props, hardwood, veneers and plywood. The most important is sawn softwood, of which not less than 160,000 standards a year are to be bought during the years 1950 to 1954. During the first eleven months of 1949, Britain imported just under 850,000 standards of this kind of timber. This excluded nearly 100,000 standards imported from Yugoslavia.

British Railways will benefit by the annual importation of half a million sleepers and the National Coal Board by the importation of 200,000 cubic metres of pit-props each year for five years.

The agreement provides for the purchase of not less than 150,000 metric tons of Yugoslav maize in each of

the five years. This compares with a total of just under 650,000 long tons imported into the United Kingdom during the first eleven months of 1949.

Other foodstuffs to be imported from Yugoslavia include meat, bacon, eggs, butter, cheese, poultry and beans.

These comprise beef, veal, mutton and lamb, of which 36,000 tons will be imported, 500 tons this year, 2,500 tons in 1951, 7,000 tons in 1952, 11,000 tons in 1953 and 15,000 tons in 1954; bacon, 2,000 tons in 1951 rising to 8,000 tons in 1954, making a total of 18,000 tons; eggs, 1,000 tons in 1950, rising to 4,000 tons in 1954, a total of 11,000 tons; lard and oil, 10,000 tons over the five years; butter, 700 tons in the five years.

The lard, oil and butter will not start to arrive until 1952. Cheese totalling 1,000 metric tons will be imported but will not start arriving until 1952. Nine-thousand metric tons of tinned tunny and sardines are to be imported starting with 1,000 tons this year.

The non-ferrous metals in the agreement include lead, copper, mercury, zinc and chrome ore. The quantities are small compared with Britain's present imports, except for mercury, of which 100 metric tons a year are to be imported from Yugoslavia. This compares with a total import of 313 long tons into Britain during the first eleven months of 1949.

Yugoslavia will get from Britain wool, yarn, oil, motor and aviation spirit, dyes, crude rubber and chemicals. Her transport problem will be eased by the importation of 650,000 metric tons of crude oil over the five years, 150,000 metric tons of motor spirit and 10,000 metric tons of aviation spirit. In addition, Yugoslavia will get £140,000 worth of special types of commercial vehicles

and £250,000 worth of spare parts for cars, trucks and tractors in 1950.

A certain amount of elasticity is given by the undertaking that the United Kingdom Government will issue upon application and before 31st December 1950 any licences necessary for the importation from Yugoslavia of goods other than the kinds mentioned up to a total value of £1,700,000. The Yugoslav Government reciprocates up to a total value of £1,100,000. Both governments will enter into negotiations each year for the importation of miscellaneous goods to come into force on 1st January in respect of the succeeding twelve months period.

The agreement lays down "Such provisions may also relate to trade between Yugoslavia and any of the territories for whose international relations the Government of the United Kingdom are responsible".

The extent of the field open in Yugoslavia to British manufacturers and industrialists is indicated by the admitted effect of the Cominform blockade. Details were given by Boris Kidrich, Chairman of the Economic Planning Commission, during the Budget debate in the National Assembly in December 1949.

He revealed that as a result of the blockade, Yugoslavia had lost 49 per cent of her total imports, which came from Russia and the Eastern bloc countries. These imports included the greater part of her petrol and oil supplies, all her coke, two-thirds of her cotton, three-quarters of her road materials and the greater part of her industrial raw materials.

The Yugoslav Five Year Industrialisation Plan had been so completely geared to the Eastern bloc economy that 90 per cent, or 20,000 million dinars' (about £140 millions) worth of capital equipment was to have come

from that source. In actual fact, less than 5 per cent had been delivered. •

He admitted that as a result of the blockade, the plan had been modified and some industries were facing 'great difficulties'. These included the iron and steel and building industries, which were, however, developing normally and the electro-energy and chemical industries, which were below normal.

In addition to the trade agreement with Britain, Yugoslavia received in 1949 a 25 million dollar loan from the American Import and Export Bank, of which 20 million dollars are for the purchase of mining and metal industry equipment and 5 million dollars for industrial raw materials. A further 9 million dollar loan has been received from the International Monetary Fund to buy raw materials.

The United States signed a provisional civil air transport agreement with Yugoslavia, establishing an air route between Yugoslavia and the American zones of Germany and Austria.

The joint Yugoslav-Soviet air line Yusta, which operated a service between Belgrade and Tirana, capital of Albania, ceased to function in the summer of 1949. The company which operated it was a joint Soviet-Yugoslav affair on a pattern common to the satellite countries, where Soviet Russia seized the opportunity presented by the presence of large numbers of her troops in the liberated countries to establish a firm grip on the trade and commerce of most of them through joint companies formed under the aegis of the Soviet military occupation authorities.

The Anglo-Yugoslav Trade Agreement, the granting of the British credit and the American loans will give moral support to Tito in his cold war with the Comin-

form and the Kremlin. They will help him overcome some of the difficulties caused by the Cominform blockade, they will help him keep Yugoslavia's dilapidated transport system going, they will help him keep Yugoslavia's economy ticking over and they will help him implement his Five Year Plan, which, however, will still have to be modified.

Without this help, Yugoslavia's Five Year Plan would, sooner or later, have been brought to a standstill.

However, too much importance should not be accorded to the Anglo-Yugoslav Trade Agreement and the loans from America. The amounts involved are small and will not put Yugoslavia on her feet immediately or in the near future. The agreements are more a significant pointer as to the assessment in the West of Tito's chances of surviving the long-drawn-out struggle with the Kremlin.

It is plain that Britain and the United States consider Tito 'a good risk'. But the struggle between Belgrade and Moscow is not over and the Russians are as stubborn as the Yugoslavs. If Russia should go to the uttermost limits in her campaign to eliminate Tito, then the Western Powers will be called upon to take courageous decisions of a major moral, political and military character, if Yugoslavia is not to become the Spain of the second half of the twentieth century.

The main problem confronting Tito as a result of the Anglo-Yugoslav Trade Agreement will be to persuade the peasants to surrender the necessary foodstuffs, with or without compulsion.

In a very significant New Year broadcast, Tito urged that every attempt should be made to secure the co-operation of the peasants by voluntary means. He said that local officials had not always maintained the volun-

tary principle in organising peasant co-operatives. He added that entry into such co-operatives must remain free and that the best way of attracting peasants into them was to improve their quality and make them efficient.

He admitted that there was still a small number of what he described as 'class enemies' among the peasants, who refused to carry out their obligations to the Socialist State. He said that these people must be made to feel the full weight of the law upon them.

The significance of this broadcast lies in the fact that until the signing of the Anglo-Yugoslav Trade Agreement, the trend was to apply more and more drastic measures to get the Yugoslav peasants to collectivise, whether they wanted to or not.

One effect of the improvement of relations between Yugoslavia and the West has been the resumption for the first time since the end of the war of the Danube barge traffic beyond Linz.

At the beginning of January, the first commercial shipment of Yugoslav goods to pass along the Danube since the war was granted permission by the Soviet, Austrian and American authorities to pass through Linz on its way to Regensburg in Germany. The cargo consisted of 2,700 tons of pyrites carried in two Yugoslav motor-ships and six barges.

The fact that the Russians allowed the shipment to pass seems to indicate the existence of an agreement under which the Yugoslav Government would not interfere with the passage of Soviet, Czechoslovak and Hungarian ships and barges through that part of the Danube that lies inside Yugoslavia's frontiers, despite the Cominform economic blockade of Yugoslavia.

But, although Tito has established economic relations with Britain and sought loans in the United States, this does not mean that he has granted any political concessions.

The strength of Tito's position in the Balkans lies in the fact that, while successfully defying the Kremlin, he has not ceased to be a Communist. He has not budged one inch from Communism and in many ways has demonstrated himself a better Communist than Stalin.

He has behaved with considerable moderation towards the one country among the Cominform band which, from a geographical and military point of view, he could quite easily bully if he so desired, namely Albania.

The only action he has taken against Albania has been to cease acting as representative of Albania for the repatriation of Albanians and to break off diplomatic relations.

Yugoslavia is off to a good start in the second half of the twentieth century. It remains to be seen whether, after a period of economic aid from Britain and the United States, Tito decides that the freedoms of the Western world would be advantageous to Yugoslavia and should be imported into the country; whether the secret police should be abolished and the Press set free, to mention just two of the most outstanding blots on the country.

A slight gesture has been made. As a sop to public opinion in the West, the Yugoslav Ministry of Interior started off the New Year by announcing an immediate amnesty for 7,304 prisoners for good behaviour and work while in prison. The prisoners included political offenders, such as peasants who resisted compulsory purchase of their grain by the Government and sabotaging collectivisation.

A week previously, the Minister of Interior, Alexander Rankovich, told the National Assembly that 3,473 prisoners had been freed before their time earlier this year, bringing the total freed since 1946 to 17,810.

Should Russia take action to silence Tito by force, then UNO will be given an opportunity to regain its lost prestige and assert its authority as guardian of world peace.

Definite action by UNO in support of Tito would serve notice on Russia that what has happened in the Far East will not be allowed to happen in Europe.

It would encourage satellite countries to emulate Tito and declare their independence from the Kremlin, safe in the knowledge that if the Russians acted to stamp out their independence movements, they would get support from the West in the shape of action, as distinct from words.

If the opportunity is lost, then the slide down the slippery slope of appeasement will have started and the impression will be created that the freedom-loving powers are not prepared to back up their convictions with deeds.

If Tito appeals to UNO in vain, or if little is done in a practical way to support him, then all those who think like him in the satellite countries will lose heart and Russia's grip on Eastern Europe will have been strengthened so much the more. The spread of Stalin-Communism will have been assisted further by default.

Definite action in the shape of the air lift solved the difficult Berlin situation and brought the Russians round to a more reasonable frame of mind.

If Russia and the Cominform countries turn Yugoslavia into another Greece, another air lift may be necessary, this time to Yugoslavia. It was done during

the Second World War by the Balkan Air Force. It could be done again.

In addition to the fundamental ideological conflict between Tito and Stalin, there is a latent struggle for power which had not been so widely publicised until the Kostov trial.

Much of the vitriol that Moscow is pouring on Tito is due not only to the bitterness of the 'Mother Church' (for it must not be forgotten that Communism is an all-demanding fanatical, political 'religion') at being forsaken by one of her sons, but also to the feeling that Marshal Tito is getting too big for his boots.

Tito is credited with the ambition to form a Balkan Federation of which Yugoslavia would be the head. He had talks with Dimitrov on the subject. Dimitrov was summoned to Moscow to explain himself and later died there.

Moscow had a scheme for the establishment of a Macedonian Republic, which would include Yugoslav Macedonia, Bulgarian Macedonia and Greek Macedonia.

Tito was opposed to any Macedonian Federation in which Yugoslavia played a junior role. For the Yugoslav Communist Party had solved the Yugoslav Macedonia problem by the creation of a Federal Republic, in which Macedonia was one of six republics, all on an equal footing.

Tito had no objection to a Macedonia incorporated under the leadership of Yugoslav Macedonia.

Tito was reported to be on friendly terms with Markos, the leader of the Greek guerrillas. Markos was removed and replaced by Partsalides. Later Tito closed the Yugoslav frontier to Greek guerrillas fleeing from the armed forces of the Athens Government.

There is another aspect of Tito's policy. As head of the Government of a country which lost 1,700,000 lives in the Second World War and is committed to an ambitious plan for the industrialisation of the country, Tito wishes to keep out of a Third World War, should such a disaster occur, or make sure of being on the winning side.

The policy which he is at present following will enable him to choose his moment and terms for coming down on the side which he thinks is going to win.

He has no illusions. He is prepared for the worst. Yugoslavia's Budget for 1950 includes expenditure on arms production far greater than any other year. The increase is one of 3,000 million dinars.

Meanwhile, Tito remains a lonely figure in a cold war No-Man's-Land, the only National Communist openly to defy the Kremlin and survive.

Some of those who think like him in the Cominform countries have been removed from office before they could raise the standard of revolt. But there are others who think like him and who are waiting for a propitious moment to come out in opposition to the iron hand in the Kremlin.